MOUNTBATTEN AND INDEPENDENT INDIA

BY THE SAME AUTHORS

Freedom At Midnight
O Jerusalem!
Is Paris Burning?
Or I Will Dress You in Mourning
Mountbatten and Partition of India

Mountbatten and Independent India

16 August 1947–18 June 1948

Larry Collins & Dominique Lapierre

TARANG PAPERBACKS

TARANG PAPERBACKS
a division of
Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd
Regd. Office: 5 Ansari Road, New Delhi 110002
Head Office: **Vikas House, 20/4 Industrial Area, Sahibabad 201010**
Distt Ghaziabad, U.P. (India)

COPYRIGHT © LARRY COLLINS & DOMINIQUE LAPIERRE, 1985

ISBN 0-7069-2738-9

Printed at Sanjay Printers, Shahdara, Delhi-110032

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

If, quite appropriately, the theme underlying the first in our two volume series on Mountbatten and the partition of India, was one of triumph, of the last strides of the subcontinent's 400 million people towards that "lovely dawn of freedom", then the theme of this second volume must, with equal justice, be one of tragedy: the tragedy of the dead and the dispossessed of the Punjab and all those faceless hamlets of the subcontinent in which, in the wake of Partition, Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims turned on each other with a ferocity rarely seen in this violent century; the tragedy of a sundered Kashmir and the outbreak of a war whose lingering effect still endangers Indo-Pakistani peace; and, of course, the most poignant and well-marked tragedy of all, the murder of the Prophet of Non-Violence in the rose gardens of New Delhi's Birla House, January 30, 1948.

Indeed, this volume of history covers a period as disturbing as the period covered by the earlier volume is glorious. What went wrong? This is the question which will haunt scholars and historians for centuries to come. Was the cataclysmic upheaval which engulfed the Punjab and, to a lesser extent, many other areas of north-eastern India and Pakistan inevitable, the result of some preordained machination of God and Destiny, the racial and religious antagonisms so deep that nothing could prevent their explosion? Or was it rather due to some human error on the part of the men who led India in 1947, some failure of understanding, of awareness, of calculation that was responsible for the tragedy?

That certainly was the question that haunted the last Viceroy during the last three decades of his life Over and over again, the reader of these pages will see him returning to the same questions "Did I go too fast? Was there something I should have done that I didn't do?" The frequency with which he always returned to those questions, the sensitivities they inevitably stirred when we discussed them in his handsome sitting-room in Broadlands, his country home, bespeak an uneasy conscience—and Louis Mountbatten was not a man to be troubled lightly by his conscience Once, in that sitting room, underneath the oils of his royal forebears, caressing the neck of his black Labrador, he reminisced of the moment at the height of the Burma campaign when he had given Field Marshal Slim the order to cross the Irawaddy River before the monsoons, "whatever the cost" in casualties. He, alone among his staff, had slept well after that order, he admitted It was a terrible order to have to give But after studying the situation from every angle he had come to the firm decision that it had to be given—and he slept soundly thereafter

His Indian sleep in the terrible autumn of 1977 was, one feels, far less peaceful There is no doubt Mountbatten came to India determined to act fast Readers of *Mountbatten and the Partition of India* will have seen that in his striving for a time limit in his conversations with Attlee, his reports home, the records of his conversations with India's leaders His reasons were simple and rooted in British rather than Indian concerns England's imperial power structure in India was, he knew, a hollow structure Its governing elites, the Indian Civil Service and the Indian Police had been allowed to run down during the war The British army in India was undermanned and prepared to fight for only one thing a passage home The men of the Indian army, the triumphant conquerors of the Japanese in the jungles of Burma, the Germans on the slopes of Monte Cassino, were not going to be employed as instruments of imperial power against their own

people One determined shove and the edifice, Mountbatten knew, would crumble And if India was to have an upheaval he was determined it must come when Indians, not Englishmen, were responsible for India's destiny

Hence, in Mountbatten's mind, the overwhelming need for speed To be fair speed was a quality equally sought by the leaders of the Congress Party and the Muslim League For Nehru, Patel, Jinnah, Liaquat Ali Khan, independence was the goal sought for a lifetime One day's delay in its long overdue attainment was too much It was not they who were going to counsel the impatient Viceroy to go slow, to delay the accomplishment of their dreams Speed, it must be admitted, was an attribute that suited everyone concerned with India in the spring of 1947, and if the subcontinent was rushed too swiftly to independence on 15 August 1947, the guilt is hardly Mountbatten's alone Historians will strive to find a single Indian politician's voice, a single Indian editorial writer's pen protesting in June/July 1947 They will find none

More germane is the question of whether or not the violence that swept the subcontinent after 15 August 1947 could have been, or was, foreseen Nothing is more instructive in this regard than a close reading of the weekly reports submitted to the Viceroy by the governors of each of British India's provinces Those governors were the mandarins of the ICS, the finest flower of that quite remarkable establishment and, by 1947, their ranks included two Indians Unfortunately, not all of the thousands of pages we unearthed in our researches for *Freedom at Midnight* can be published here One day, however, they will rest in the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library and Indian scholars can verify for themselves our words None of those eminent experts on India, not Olaf Caroe on the Frontier, not Evan Jenkins in the Punjab, foresaw troubles on anything approaching the scale of violence that was soon to overwhelm India

Nor were the politicians more prescient Jinnah, Liaquat Ali

Khan, Nehru, Patel, all tended to minimize the danger of a massive eruption Perhaps this was a reflection of their own sense of responsibility and liberalism, perhaps it reflected a desire to let nothing stand in the way of independence's arrival Whatever the reason, there was only one voice that constantly warned that Partition would be followed by a storm of bloodshed and killing —Gandhi's And, as he was the first to admit, his was a voice to which none paid heed in those heady summer days of 1947

History has a way of providing, not answers, but ever more troubling questions, and most who study this problem will probably find themselves confronted with that dilemma Yes, India probably was rushed with undue haste to independence in August, 1947 But was the subcontinent impelled to that fateful hour by two or three or more men, or by irresistible currents of time and emotion, long suppressed, suddenly bursting forward carrying everything in their path?

No single passage in *Freedom at Midnight* caused as much controversy in India or as much understandable resentment as Mountbatten's description of Nehru and Patel as "a pair of chastened schoolboys" when the three men met on his return from Simla at the height of the Punjab crisis The reader of this volume can see the phrase, exactly as Mountbatten employed it, set in the context in which he used it To be honest, we as authors and historians had our reservations about its use, but censoring the words of the last Viceroy or anyone else we interviewed was not our function Mountbatten read the galley proofs of *Freedom at Midnight* with great care and made no objection to the phrase. Later, in correspondence with us, he regretted its use, not because he wished to qualify its accuracy but because he had appreciated his insensitivity in employing it

In any event, the Punjab crisis and the Indian Government's reaction to it constitute a great part of the transcript material employed in this volume. Vanity, as he was the first to admit,

was not the least of Louis Mountbatten's faults and many a reader is going to rebel at his description of the central role he played in those tragic days Old men tend, with the perspective of time, to see themselves in exaggerated dimension Perhaps there is in his words an element of the boastful, of a tendency Mountbatten did indeed have to see himself as constantly at the centre of the stage dominating the action Yet a very careful study of those men who were still alive and participated in those crisis meetings confirmed the essential accuracy of his words

As it must, the most poignant pages of this volume's transcript material deal with the last fast, the assassination, and the funeral of Mahatma Gandhi There is an epic quality to those last weeks of Gandhi's life, a blend of poetry and passionate tragedy that transcends our mundane lives and trivial histories while giving to his, as Nehru said that night, a light that will endure a thousand years

Neither of us, we are sure, will ever forget the afternoon we first talked to Mountbatten of Gandhi's death It was a winter evening, with premature shadows darkening the Broadlands living room and the great green lawn running down to his salmon stream Suddenly we both realized that this man who prided himself on being a professional warrior, a man who'd rolled over with his dying ship rather than leave his captain's bridge, was crying Openly, unashamedly crying, as he described entering Birla House that January afternoon and seeing Gandhi's body laid out on his straw pallet

Gandhi's death both horrified and inspired Mountbatten, horrified him because he felt a certain responsibility for it The reader will note Mountbatten's description of his meeting with Gandhi just before he proclaimed his last fast and his suggestions regarding the handing over to Pakistan of the monies the new nation was owed from India's Pre-Partition treasury Some years later, talking with Nathuram Godse's brother, Gopal, in Poona, he told us that it was the inclusion of that particular demand in

Gandhi's conditions for ending his fast that served as the catalyst which set his brother and Narayan Apte on the road to Birla House.

Like many older men—and he was in his middle and late seventies when we knew him—Mountbatten thought often of his own approaching death. Long after *Freedom at Midnight*'s publication we would visit with him regularly and it was a subject he discussed quite openly: his feelings about it, how he hoped it would—or would not—come. Inevitably, the thread of that conversation would lead to Gandhi's death. To Mountbatten, it seemed the perfect end: Gandhi had died expressing the values by which he had lived; in the sacrifice of his life he had so shocked and stirred his people that he had achieved something to justify the sacrifice, an end to the post-Partition violence. How often have we thought that had Mountbatten been alone on his fishing smack in August 1978, afloat on the sea he loved so well, he would have gone quite willingly into the night, thinking of the Mahatma and hoping that perhaps his sacrifice might help bring wisdom to the people of another land partitioned by his countrymen.

LARRY COLLINS

Part I

INTERVIEWS

A selection of personal interviews with Lord Louis Mountbatten, on the period August 16, 1947-June 18, 1948

Q. *In the entire history of the end of colonial rule, you are the only representative of a former colonial power who was asked to stay on by the leaders of a newly independent nation. How did this come about?*

A. This is how it all happened. I did not want to stay on after the transfer of power because to go from Viceroy to Constitutional Governor-General is not a very attractive proposition. And I thought the whole thing was going to collapse, which it very nearly did. I was not a starter. My wife didn't want to stay on; we thought we'd go out in what we hoped was a blaze of glory.

Then Jinnah started to say to me: "We shall be completely crushed by India. They won't give us our sterling balances, they won't give us our munitions. They'll give us nothing unless you stay and see it through."

I said, "How would you expect me to do that?"

"I think there should be two governors-general," he said, "and you would remain as the Supreme Governor-General."

"What you mean is that you want to retain a kind of Viceroy."

"No, I think it would be very difficult to retain the title of Viceroy. I'd like to call you an 'overall' Governor-General."

"Don't you see such a figure couldn't interfere in any way with the heads of two separate states? If you really feel that it's essential that I remain in some capacity to look after Pakistan's interests, then I would stay on as Governor-General of India if they asked me provided you had me as Governor-General of Pakistan. You'll be Prime Minister, Nehru will be the Indian Prime Minister. You will do things— the Governor-General will

be a figurehead But in this case, as head of both states, I would obviously use my influence in India to see that you got your stuff in a way I couldn't do if I had no responsibility for you "

Jinnah said, "Well, my solution is better "

I said, "Well, I'm sorry, but I don't think your solution will be acceptable to His Majesty's Government But I'll mention it " And I was under the impression, then, that he would want me to stay on as Governor-General This was the first time the idea came up Jinnah wanted me to see the transfer of power through

The fact that India then asked me to be Governor-General staggered me because I was still determined to be fair Jinnah was the first to say I should stay on in some way Ismay,* after this conversation, told me I couldn't stay on in Jinnah's way, but that I could, as Governor-General of both countries Ismay saw Jinnah who said, "We want Mountbatten to remain, but I think he should be overall Governor-General " Ismay then went to Nehru who thought it was a very good idea and that's how the Indians got on the road to asking me However, Jinnah later begged me to accept India's offer despite my distress at not becoming Governor-General of both nations

When I failed in this I got them to set up the Joint Defence Council They were to have joint defence, foreign affairs and communications, and if it hadn't been for Kashmir, it would have worked Having been forced to divide them, it was the germ of an idea I had devised to give them a framework in which they would start getting back together I'd also fixed it so that the Governor-General in the dominion in which they were meeting took the chair or asked the other Governor-General to take it Jinnah always asked me when we met in Pakistan

I used to see most of my ministers about once a fortnight, but Nehru I saw pretty much every day I told him I had no

*Lord Ismay, Chief of the Viceroy's Staff, and of the Governor-General's Staff till December, 1947

intention of attending Cabinet meetings .They were quite prepared at the time to have me in but I said, "No, you must learn to do without me You're the chief executive, you take the chair I don't want to be present " But I said, "I would appreciate it if I could see all the Cabinet papers before the meetings And I'd like to see you before you go in because I can perhaps help you over some of your problems before you go in "

Quite early on, a paper came up and, alas, I can't remember what the subject was, but it was something rather specious someone proposing an obviously silly thing to do I said to Nehru, "I am afraid your ministers are going to like this Do you?"

He said, "I haven't made up my mind yet "

I said, "Well let me make up your mind for you This is a silly thing to do. It will have long term repercussions " Anyway, I explained it to him and he said, "You've made your point "

Now, later, one of the Indians in the Cabinet told me the most astonishing scene from that meeting The paper was passed around and the P M said, "Now we come to item no. 3 " He did it in a rather unusual way, bless his heart He had agreed with me it shouldn't go through, it should be rejected Instead of saying at once it should be rejected, he passed it out Immediately they all started jabbering They all said it was a great idea And Nehru let them go on and when they'd finished he said, "I think it's a very bad idea," and he gave the reasons He said he'd seen His Ex who disapproved of the paper and he gave my reason

But he's only a constitutional head of state, they all said You don't have to listen to him This is a paper we want What does it matter what he thinks?

Nehru said, "You don't think we asked Mountbatten to stay here simply as a figurehead? We asked him to stay because he's more experienced than we are as an administrator He loves India as much as we do And what he says, we should do I'm not interested in what you think, I'm interested in what Mount-

batten thinks He won't have it, and I won't have it, and it's thrown out "

Q *Isn't it extraordinary that those Indian leaders whom the British had jailed and humiliated should choose you, a citizen of the former colonial power, as the first head of state of their independent country?*

A Quite remarkable on their part But I'll tell you a story One day Eamon de Valera, the great Irish statesman, went to attend a Roman Catholic conference in Australia On his way back, I invited him to put up in Government House The first night, I asked him to dinner with the family, my wife and Pamela, and Nehru. There were five of us And for some inscrutable reason he had the most uncivil conversation He started holding forth about the rigours of being in prison at the hands of the British. It wasn't very tactful or polite, but he went on, "Terrible time, you can't imagine "

When he'd finished, Nehru said, "How long were you in prison, Mr de Valera?"

"Oh, a very, very long time It made such a deep impression "

Yes, but how many years?"

"Well, not really years "

"Well, how many months?"

"Well," he said, "I didn't really count I . most of the time, I suppose, could be measured in weeks "

"In weeks?" said Nehru, "I was nine years in prison " And that finished him off Do you know I tried to see Nehru when he was in prison? Wavell refused to let me see him, which was a pity

Q *Did Nehru know?*

A I doubt it But remember this, it's very important This was not the sort of prison that, nowadays, political offenders are kept in None of our political prisoners were tortured, none were ill-used in any way whatever, most were living in very comfortable surroundings They had all their books They had free contact. They, in fact, used their time in prison to educate themselves for the time when they were going to take over **I believe that if the British hadn't put them in prison, they would have been even less qualified, I mean, they weren't very highly qualified when they did take over** Nehru himself had said, "We're going to get rid of all the Indian ICS who've been tainted by the British " It took him a long time to realize you can't run the administration without the civil service and they were lucky there were so many Indians in the service All this he came round to It's a miracle he did it all. He really was marvellous But I repeat that imprisonment for the Indian leaders was not—as is popularly supposed—what it was in Long Kesh concentration camp They were politely and nicely treated We always had very pleasant officers who looked after them They have absolutely no complaints about how they were treated, in prison

Q *How closely did you work with Edwina?*

A Very closely My wife could sometimes make a point unofficially with Nehru where I could not, officially This is true inasmuch as we always had our meals alone together with Pamela No member of the staff was present unless there were guests **I used to tell her everything that was happening** Not in any great detail, but the main things, and we would discuss if what I was doing was right, and she unquestionably would reinforce what I'd said over tea

Q *The maharajas of India had been the strongest pillars of Britain's presence in India, and many of them were your personal*

friends India's independence meant the end of their rule Can you recall some personal memories of them?

A I certainly can Some of them had been for years my dearest friends, Bikaner, for instance His father was the great Gunga Singh who was a member of the British War Cabinet in World War I His personal salute was raised from 17 to 19 guns—two more guns was a tremendous honour Many rulers had two guns knocked off when they behaved badly but he got two added on!

My mother's brother, the last Grand-Duke of Hesse, went to India as a grandson of Queen Victoria and went all round the country, and made great friends with old Bikaner When I was a small boy—I should say about seven years old—he came over with all his retinue to one of my uncle's palaces in the Grand Duchy of Hesse where he brought with him a very nice little boy, two years younger than me, and this little boy was, in 1947, the Maharaja I knew him very well, he'd been with me on the Prince of Wales's staff, in 1921-22 We were on Christian-name terms and all the rest of it—if you can use that expression—with a Hindu. He came at once to meet me in Delhi when I arrived and he told me that he was one hundred per cent behind me in whatever I decided

Then various other Maharajas came to see me. But the only person even to call me by my own Christian name or nickname, Dicky, was the Maharaja of Bikaner because we'd been children together. There was one other exception Jaipur I had played in the Jaipur polo team, and I got to know him very well, and he also called me Dicky None of the others did, they were all very respectful

After independence I wrote to the King, and I said, "Although we've just transferred power, and although the orders of the Indian Empire have been put into suspense, the Star of India has *not* been put into suspense, and I would like to give the Grand Cross of

the Star of India to the Maharaja of Jaipur He's already got a Grand Cross of the Indian Empire " The King agreed immediately I invested the Maharaja of Jaipur with the Grand Cross of the Star of India in the presence of two dozen rulers, half-a-dozen Cabinet Ministers, perhaps a dozen Ambassadors, and all the great nobles of the state It was a full-dress Durbar in the city of Jaipur itself After the ceremony, the Maharaja said to me, "Dickie, this afternoon, we have a great polo match, with the strongest teams in India "

I said, "I'm looking forward to that very much "

And he said, "We want you to play "

I said, "Don't be silly I haven't played polo since before the war I haven't played since 1939 and it's now 1947 That's eight years I haven't got anything "

And he said, "Well, I'm sure you've not forgotten it "

And I said, "Well, no, I suppose not, but I haven't got any clothes," and they said, "Oh yes, you have We've fixed up with your staff They haven't told you, you've got everything there, everything you require "

Then, I rather weakly said yes, and we went down They had 135 polo ponies in one long string He said, "You can have any six of these ponies you like—but these are the six best "

I said, "Well, I'll take them "

Now, the highest handicap players in India were probably at that time the greatest living polo-players in the world I mean, they were all 8-, 9-, 10- goal players and I will say that for about a chukker or two, I lasted with them quite well, then I started to blow up a bit, and I just managed I insisted on playing at back so that I didn't have too much work to do—but after six chukkers in front of enormous crowds on a croquet lawn—wonderful place, really absolutely top-class international polo—I came in practically dead—sweating from every pore Sat down, they gave me a drink, and I said—they gathered round and I said, "You're all swines I thought you were my friends, and you've tried to

kill me!"

But the Maharaja of Jaipur, and the Maharajas of India in general, were not only playing polo Here's a point I want to make about the Princes By and large, in the Indian states which were well-ruled, and there were quite a lot of them, the people were, I believe, on the whole happier than in British India Because they were in fact ruled by a family they had known for years, that they adored When I was making a film in 1967, I went down to Jaipur with the film producer and the scriptwriter and the team, and I umpired a polo match in which the Maharaja played and the Maharani came down You couldn't get off the ground at the end The crowd came round, you see, and they started off, "*Maharaja ki jai, Maharani ki jai!*"—then they recognised me and shouted for me as well, but they didn't know I was going to be there They kissed their hands and crowded round They were simply delighted to see them

Now, in fact, the Indian Princes as a whole behaved well in extremely difficult circumstances They realized that they were going to lose their livelihood They were in great danger They knew they could fight—very easily, because they all had armies From a division, like the Nizam of Hyderabad, to brigades, like Kashmir and Jaipur (very fine brigades) down to battalions These would all fight to the last The States' People's Congress Party, which Patel was so pleased about had announced that they would overthrow the Princes by internal revolution I said to Patel, "That just shows where you're wrong You get reports from some excited revolutionaries who haven't got the people behind them at all In the Indian states, you can't persuade them that they're getting rid of the British because in fact they've been ruled by their own Maharajas for years and most of them like them Certainly, the soldiers will fight, and you'll have great loss of life, great loss of valuable property, a great bad press—bad image, in the world," and I persuaded him then, to let me make the instrument of accession based on three subjects, that they

should agree to give up external affairs, communications and defence (which they had never run before anyway, the Viceroy always did) and that they should continue administering This they agreed to do Then I got Nehru (who was very unsound about the Princes, in my opinion—curiously enough, being himself very much of an aristocratic family)—he agreed that V. Patel should be the Secretary for the States I liked old Patel but he was not of course an aristocratic man, he was quite an affluent businessman I got my little V P Menon to be Secretary for the States and to work with all the Princes, and so it was that I argued with him "Look, if you let me negotiate on your behalf with the Princes, because they're too frightened to negotiate with you, if I can get them to agree to sign an instrument of accession before the transfer of power, saying that on the day of the transfer of power don't forget the British position—the British Government said that paramountcy would be retroceded —awful word, it merely meant they'd no longer be under anybody, that they'd be free and independent

A number of rulers were stupid enough to think that independence meant that they could really be free and independent I said, "Well you can't be independent You're landlocked in the middle of India " They asked them if they might become British Dominions I said, "The British won't accept it " "Why not?" I said, "You're preventing us from doing the complete act of giving independence to India, if we have little pockets of resistance everywhere " They were very sad about that, some of them, particularly the Muslims, like Bhopal The ruler of Travancore had a very intelligent but devious Diwan who wanted to have his state declared a Dominion, directly under the British, which I refused to do I told Vallabhbhai Patel, "I think you must let me countersign on your behalf the instruments of accession of the Princes That means that they will accede on these three subjects, either to India or Pakistan, according to geographical contiguity "

Now if you look at the map of Pakistan, they had only one important state and a few small ones, and some of the ones up in the tribes, like the Wali of Swat, and so forth up in the Khyber Pass But the majority, I should say 90 or 95 per cent, were in India And Patel told me, "If you bring me a basket filled with every apple of the tree, I'll buy it If it hasn't got all the apples, I won't " I said, "Well, all right Fair enough, bearing in mind that I can't guarantee there won't be a few sour apples "

So we argued and I said, "Would you leave me a dozen?" and he said, "That's too many I'll let you have two " And I said, "That's too few " Then I went down to eight and he came up to four, and finally we settled for half-a-dozen, and I said, We don't argue, if I get them all except six, all right " And I got them all, except the following Junagadh Kashmir, Hyderabad and one or two small states that fell in later on So my part of the contract was fulfilled, and he accepted it Now this really meant that they had a position in the new organization which was quite satisfactory Then came the next step the "mediatization " I showed the rulers that in my own family, the Hesse, we had experienced the "mediatization" of Napoleon That was in 1806 Napoleon took all the small houses, the small independent princes and mediatized them They became then part of a bigger group This is how the Landgrave of Hesse, my ancestor, became the Grand-Duke of Hesse, and all the little independent people became his vassals and came into the state There was no independence But they made a few groups and I said to India's rulers, I wanted the same things, that the big states should take in smaller states All this was worked out—some of it was done, I must confess, with some pressure which I didn't know about at the time, which was rather naughty, but all of them on the whole agreed to it To cut a long story short, V P came to me one day and said, "You know, there's one thing The Princes are doing all this because they trust your word But they're beginning to ask—what happens when you leave?"

I said, "They'll have to trust the word of Nehru " He said, "They will They accept Nehru and Patel They certainly accept Rajagopalachari What happens when they go? When they die?"

I said, "By that time they'll have got themselves integrated in the states " He said, ' No **The danger is that the arrangements we're now entering into will be rejected and renounced by later forms of government in India. It must be put in the Constitution."** That was his brainwave, and I agreed So he went to Patel, who agreed, I went to Nehru, who agreed, and Nehru got the Cabinet to agree—and finally it went to the Constituent Assembly, that it should be enshrined in the Constitution The important part about that is, that the Constitution couldn t be c[illegible]ed without a two-thirds majority—and it never entered anybody's mind that Nehru's daughter would one day be the one to try to engineer their downfall It's terribly disgraceful, what she's done

Q *But wasn t this historically inevitable?*

A More or less inevitable, but not that way I ll tell you why Look, we had a very good arrangement What did we do? We arranged that they now gave up their states They turned them all over—not just communications, external affairs and defence, but everything—and in return they were going to keep their private property, including their private palaces their privy purse, which was that part of the state revenue which they used as a sort of salary for themselves They were to retain their titles, and their privileges, to be free from arrest, and have diplomatic privileges throughout India This was enshrined in the Constitution and I put a provision in, that if any particular Prince misbehaved himself or committed a crime, I or my successors as Head of State could derecognize him by writing and saying, "You are no longer Maharaja you are just Mr So-and-so, and you're going to be arrested and tried " That was a safeguard Every time the

succession passed, the privy purse would be scaled down dramatically, shall we say by half, so that the very first time a ruler died, his son would get half as much, and his son, half again, and so on It was coming down to a point where it was virtually extinguished And the privy purse was needed, not just for riotous living at all, but to pay the pensions of servants who had been theirs for generations, to pay the livelihood of their own widowed mothers, or sisters who hadn't married, to enable the family to go on Do you know that some of these multi-multimillionaires are now practically down to begging? Some are really in a deplorable state, and it's been done in the most beastly way and I'd like to try and explain that although the Princes were an anachronism and the sensible ones knew it couldn't go on forever, they behaved sensibly and in a statesmanlike way I was allowed by my Government to negotiate sensibly, and we came to a settlement which they thought honourable and just, and so did the other side And what Indira Gandhi did was really disgraceful She tried to get the Constitution amended by a two-thirds majority She got her majority in the Lower House by just a few. She failed in the Upper House, so it wasn't passed So angry was she, that she then decided to use the loop-hole I had left in the Constitution to de-recognize a Maharaja who had committed a crime She got the President of India, Giri, who was away on an official visit at the time (that's why he was known as the Rubber Stamp, when he came back) to write to all the Princes and derecognize them I don't say he wrote to all 565—some of the smaller ones may have been absorbed—but, at least to a hundred

Well, of course, they'd committed no crime This removed their privy purses, their palaces and private possessions, their titles, their freedom from arrest, and their privileges So they took it to the Supreme Court, and the Supreme Court (as I mentioned before, British jurisprudence works very well throughout India) had the courage and guts to throw it out, and said it

was illegal Whereupon Mrs Gandhi, in an absolute rage said she would get even with them When she won the election, that landslide election, she was able to get her two-thirds majority A horrible thing to have done Now at the end, she has been a bit more gracious and allowed some form of title, a little money and so forth—it's not completely harsh, as it was, but it's pretty bad Now the Princes have done nothing to deserve this They behaved honourably and decently and I'd like you to find out for yourselves—go and see the remaining Princes and princely families, and see what they say I think you'll find they felt they were fairly treated by me and I considered they behaved in a statesmanlike and dignified manner And at a big luncheon-party which I gave (it's in my diary) I told them, "I want you to remember that what you are about to face is virtually a revolution You're going to lose, in due course, your ruling powers, that's inevitable Don't do what the French did after the French Revolution The French aristocracy refused to serve the revolutionary government, the Republic With the result that you'll find very few genuine French aristocrats who serve in the army, the navy, the air force or the diplomatic service—very few A few more now, but nothing like what there should be They have withdrawn themselves and therefore are not—I don't think they're despised, but they're not looked up to or admired in France They mean nothing to the ordinary French people Now what you must do is show that you're willing to serve, because India has a very tiny proportion that is sufficiently educated to do anything at all They haven't enough people to be ambassadors, barely enough to be doctors and lawyers, junior civil servants—Offer your services"

And I went to Patel and Nehru and said, "Accept their offers" And the following happened The Maharaja of Jamnagar went out as the Indian representative to the UN His neighbour, in Kutch, went as Governor of Madras, one of the three great Presidencies. The Maharaja of Jaipur was first Governor of a

group of states and then went as Indian Ambassador to Madrid. The Maharaja of Patiala, who was the last great Maharaja left alive—he was a youngster with me—is now India's Ambassador in The Hague, and before that, in Rome A magnificent-looking figure, not very clever, no Sikhs are clever, but very decent. The Maharao Rajah of Kutch served as Ambassador in Norway, and Peru Many other rulers served in the diplomatic corps

Q *You have a personal affection for the Rajmata of Jaipur Do you see a role for her in India?*

A She is a woman of considerable stature in India She could get elected any time she likes All the people love her I deplore the hardship she went through during the Emergency I hope she and Indira will make peace one day Incidentally, on my advice, her son, who was Adjutant of the Bodyguard after I left, remained in the army He wanted to get out I said, "Don't—you stay in the army" Same thing with the Maharaja of Kapurthala They both stayed, and both were decorated for gallantry in the last war with Pakistan They led their troops to victory

Q *One of your major opponents in your negotiations with the Princes was your own Political Secretary, Sir Conrad Corfield* *

A He really was very, very naughty He tried to muck up the Princes, to get them to stand out That's fascinating You see I was quite fond of him but he turned out to be so naughty He was supposed to be working under my orders He burnt all the papers, he tried to organize the Princes to resist, and finally there was the most deplorable scene, at Partition Council, I

Sir Conrad Corfield, ICS, Political Adviser to the Crown Representative rom August, 1945

think, when Nehru completely lost his temper—and everybody supported him—and said Corfield had to go And I eased him out only because I thought he was doing the Princes a great deal of harm

Q *Apparently Corfield thought the Princes should wait for independence (and end of paramountcy) before* [illegible] *Would this have created a mess?*

A It would have meant the most frightful mess, because you can rest assured, there would have been some stupid hotheads among the Princes who would have done something and the whole thing would have gone sour Imagine, I transferred power to two-thirds of the area, but also to three-fourths of the population This means that three-fourths of the population of India would, at the transfer of power, have become a separate, independent nation—either one, or two, but separate All unified All with the late British direct rule—and then one-fourth of the population, in 565 fragmented groups, would have their paramountcy retroceded They would then be independent They could then do what they liked They could negotiate, or not negotiate Some of the smaller rulers were so stupid that they couldn't see that if they didn't negotiate they'd be finished (They might be finished as well if they did, I'll freely admit that, but like this they'd be absolutely crippled) This would have meant fighting, I've no doubt at all Every state had its own little [illegible] even had an air force! The thing would have broken down in every direction None of the trains could have run to Bombay, or Calcutta, or Madras, without their permission, and one small state could have stopped the whole thing They could have claimed to stop overflying They could certainly prevent the air-fields, many of which were in the Princely States, from being used, they would not have allowed any postal transmission, or telephones, telegraphs, and if 90

per cent of them went along, 10 per cent could still wreck it And Corfield thought they could get better terms! But the point is that, in that process, they were going to mess up India as a whole He was pathologically for the Princes, he could think of nothing else at all He positively disliked all the Indian leaders, made no bones, and was very unwise in his criticism of people like Nehru, etc —which didn't make him very much beloved He actually thought that by doing—I knew what he wanted to do—they would get better terms in the process There would have been a sort of civil war It was just not on

The point was, he was supposed to work for me I was the King Emperor's representative for exercising the functions of paramountcy, and he was my Secretary in that particular Office, but he didn't want to work with me, because he thought I was trying to do something that he was trying to stop. He hardly ever saw me, and I was much too busy to worry about him Until I discovered he had a lot of plots going on The Princes came to tell me what Corfield was advising and I said, "You're absolutely crazy!" I exercised no threats I merely said, "What is he advising you to do?" And then I pointed out why it wouldn't work. I said, "It's up to you, do what you like But I'll tell you this much. If you don't, all of you, sign the instrument of accession before, I repeat *before*, the transfer of power, then I assure you that you are doomed I don't say you'll be at the mercy of the States Peoples' Parties, but at the mercy of the Indian government They can do what they like I can't protect you If you all got together and banded your armies together to fight, you might have a chance " But they would never do that They were simply at sixes and sevens, never worked together in any shape or form I was the only person who ever brought the Princes together

Q *Did you approve Corfield's initiative to have the rulers burn their papers before their accession?*

A I didn't mind that I supported him doing that, although it infuriated Nehru I thought it was right There was no reason why the Indian government, who were not successor governors as far as the states were concerned, should have the papers. It infuriated Nehru I still think it's right No, what was wrong was that attempt to get the rulers to band together to, so-called, get better terms from the Government of India, but terms in place of what? With the threat of arms and holding up communications? Very naughty Corfield was not only "*plus royaliste que le roi*", he'd become completely submerged. He lived for them which was splendid in the days when we ran the whole place, but quite useless when this was to be given over.

Now, if you ask the Maharani of Jaipur she'll tell you, because she told me herself, that she and her very sensible and clued-up husband were under no illusions whatsoever that this could continue. And she says she thinks no sensible Prince could possibly have thought they could go on, with that paradoxical system which was only possible under the old order. Protection of the paramount power They knew that with independence this was going to change They were relieved that I was coming out to do it for they knew I was a friend of theirs and would try and do it properly

They knew there could be no rebellion or revolution They could be deposed by the Viceroy, easily, if they'd misbehaved, and a minor punishment you could inflict was to take two guns off their salute (which was a great thing because they lost face with their brother Princes) Now, if there had been any feeling that they were tyrants, or cruel oppressors, the very moment paramount power was removed, they'd have been overthrown. The Congress Party was pouring money into the states to try and raise revolutionary people and no Prince was overthrown, that I can remember In other words, their subjects were satisfied with their rule—some were very happy and adored their rulers, others were less happy but accepted it. That's

the first point Secondly, they had this ghastly adjustment to make How were they going to fit into the new India? And then, I gave them an out—I found the solution There were two solutions—mine, and Conrad Corfield's His appeared, superficially, to be better for the Princes, inasmuch as they would not have had to give up anything But they would be ground out in horrible circumstances much quicker Now we know that my arrangements have been gone back on, which we couldn't foresee, but at least, even so, they've had at least 25 years of pretty good life, and the appalling position they're in now is going to be slightly improved again With Conrad Corfield there would have been civil war in India—much bloodshed—and the Princes themselves would probably have been assassinated or taken into captivity and probably shot

Q *Do you think that Kashmir and Hyderabad might have held out?*

A Well, take Hyderabad A very big state, as you know, it wanted to hold out, to become a Dominion I said, "No—it's against my policy to allow any part of India to have independence separately for the obvious reason that it's bad enough with Pakistan and India—worse still if it's Kashmir, Bengal, Calcutta a free city, Hyderabad—it just wouldn't work In Hyderabad's case," I said, "you haven't even got an outlet to the sea—no means of communicating You cannot send a single bag of rice except across the physical border with India If you say you're going to fly—where are you going to fly to? Perhaps to Ceylon—but Ceylon is in the British Commonwealth, and they probably will not let the plane land Perhaps Rangoon—otherwise, nowhere In any case it's not the same thing as having real ships that can take goods, and people " The Maharaja said he didn't want to do that—was afraid to, because he had so many Hindus I said, "You've got very few'" He said, "They don't like Pakistan"—which of course at the time was true. "Very well," I said,

"If you want to join India, do so, and I'll send in troops to defend you—or join Pakistan, and I'll tell Jinnah to send troops If you do nothing, you'll be a battlefield in the end, you'll be driven out " Which is exactly what happened Now C C advised him to take the precise course which ended in there being a battlefield Junagadh? Much the same thing

Nobody has told the story of this attempt by one Englishman to get the Princes to stand up to the Viceroy, the Government, the King Emperor and the Indian Government It really was a counsel of despair he was giving The funny part is, very few of the Princes really believed in him They knew he was an old friend, but thought his advice was bad They used to tell me what he was doing, and I said, ' Pay no attention This is without my authority or my permission " But can you imagine a man, paid by the British Government to be the Viceroy's right-hand man, who deliberately goes against the Viceroy's policy?

Q *Thanks largely to your efforts, the vast majority of Indian rulers accepted merging their states into independent India without offering too much resistance Was this result achieved easily?*

A Certainly not The whole thing had a magical atmosphere about it, and then—I hadn't yet got them all to agree that they would adhere, or would accede to the Dominion of India One day, during a session in the Chamber of Princes, the Diwan of one of the states refused to take any decision because his ruler was away He said, "Your Excellency, my ruler is away in Europe I have asked His Highness to return urgently He is now on the high seas and he will not arrive back in Bombay until after August 15th I cannot on my own, therefore, take the tremendously important step to accede "

I said, "Yes, I see that, and yet, if every other ruler here does accede, your ruler couldn't wish to be left out "

"Yes, but how can I be sure?"

I said, "Let me see if I can help you"—and, by an extraordinary chance, there was a very big crystal, circular paperweight on the desk, and I said, "I have here a crystal ball I will look into it and I'll tell you what to say I see His Highness, he is at the Captain's table having lunch "

"Your Highness, what would you wish that your Diwan should do?"

"Oh!" I said, "His Highness wants you to sign the instrument of accession "

Everybody was absolutely amazed! They didn't just laugh They had an awful feeling I really had seen him The whole thing had a most astonishing effect and really tipped the scale

Q *Some Princes, however, were to create some real problems*

A Sure enough, and I can think of a number of cases where I know I saved their reputations The first began after the transfer of power Junagadh is a small state north of Bombay which is famous as it has the only lions in India The Nawab of Junagadh was a Muslim He was in the pocket of Jinnah and he wanted to accede to Pakistan This was idiotic because he had no land binding him to Pakistan His only communication would be by sea It would be a pretty silly thing to do Worse than that, 85 per cent of his people were Hindus, and Vallabhbhai Patel who was a native of nearby Gujarat, was wildly excited and enraged He wanted to invade Junagadh with troops immediately Seeing the danger, I created quickly the Defence Committee of the new Dominion of which I took the chair Even if I was criticized at the time, I felt it was right and nobody else had enough knowledge to do it

I then ruled that no troops of any sort were to move into Junagadh This way I managed to stop Patel trying to stage an invasion of Junagadh. The Nawab was a very odd person He was a trained vet, a great lover of dogs—he was the fellow who

had spent a lakh of rupees on the marriage of two of his dogs. Of course, as I managed to completely stop them going in, but also stopped him from going over to Pakistan, he found himself completely cut off, with 85 per cent of his population against him He then took all his money with him in a bag and a few of his dogs, and he flew off to Kashmir

Now, another occasion when I saved the new Indian leaders their bacon was over places like Pondicherry and Goa I said, "Now look, let me talk to the French I'm quite certain they'll be sensible and we'll come to a satisfactory conclusion over Pondicherry and the French possessions up there It's no good talking to the Portuguese, and I'll tell you now—they're completely reactionary, and they're not terribly bright They can't manage it You can freeze them out"

Another bacon I saved was over Hyderabad The Nizam of Hyderabad ruled over a country the size of France which, again, had a five or 10 per cent Muslim population and all the rest were Hindus.

The Indian leaders were incapable of negotiating They hated the Nizam so much and he hated and despised them He had Walter Monckton* as his Constitutional Adviser, and Walter saw me, and he said, "The Nizam is prepared to authorize me, as his Representative, to negotiate with you a settlement in Hyderabad"

I said, "All right I'll let my Government know and see if they'll let me do it"

Then we were in the extraordinary position where two of us, Englishmen, were negotiating between India and Hyderabad This dragged on for months We couldn't move the Nizam to accept a peaceful accession In May 1948, just before I was going to leave, Monckton came to see me and said, "I've told the Nizam

*Sir Walter Turner Monckton, Constitutional Adviser to the Nizam of Hyderabad

that this is the last effort I'm going to make I've told him that you are leaving in June and when you leave there's no question whatever, there's no more negotiation I impressed him with this It means they'll invade Hyderabad There'll be a bloody take-over "

I said, "If you can get the Nizam and his government to come along as near as you can to the position the Indian government has taken up, I'll try and see what I can do with that "

He went back and, to his astonishment, the Prime Minister, a shiftless old creature, the Nizam, all agreed? He came back with heads of agreement which I thought were reasonable, but I knew it would take a bit of selling with India

Well, I had to go up and see Patel, who was not only Home Minister but Minister of States He was then ill, and later on died, as you know, and he was up at Birsirla in the hills And I said, "I'm going to come up and say goodbye," and he was very touched, very sweet, tears in his eyes and we had lunch together And then, just before lunch, I said, "I've brought you the new heads of agreement which Walter Monckton's worked up with the Nizam, and they've been approved by the Nizam and the Government Here you are and will you accept them?"

And he said, "Ah! That's a nuisance! Oh! I knew they'd try to get all that, but it's out of the question! Oh no, indeed, I wouldn't dream of it. No, no, a thousand times no!"

Then we had lunch—and when we went away, he became very affectionate, put his arms around me and he said, "I don't think you realize that but for you we'd never have got a solution We would have had bloodshed and trouble and we'd probably still be stuck under British rule " He said, "I don't think enough has been done to recognize it I am in a very powerful position I can give you anything you like Anything within my power What do you want?"

I said, "Well!—do you swear, that whatever I ask for you will give me?"

"Yes"

"I want your signature on this bit of paper"

He absolutely blanched at this and he said, "You can't mean it"

I said, "Yes I do"

He said, "You're taking advantage of my promise"

I said, "Yes, I am!"

"How can you double-cross me in the last act? You've ruined our friendship!"

I said, "I haven't The day will come when you'll bless me I want your signature on that bit of paper"

"Why?"

I said, "Because either they're going to accept this, in which case you've got—believe me—an advance in your position—or they go back on it, in which case you have every right to go and take over Hyderabad"

Walter Monckton couldn't believe it So he went straight back to Hyderabad—and at that time the head of the Muslims had been brought down to take over, and refused to let the Nizam accept the agreement, and it was rejected

Walter Monckton said to the Nizam, "Right! Now you've had it Thanks to my personal friendship with Lord Mountbatten and his great statesmanlike attitude to Hyderabad, we looked like having a reasonable solution, and Hyderabad had a better position in India than any of the states—and you've rejected it

"Now I'll tell you something The world will know—I shall bear witness that India was honourable enough to accept *our* proposals Now you've rejected our own proposals—India will take you over and you'll have to go"

The Nizam said, "If India advances, we shall fight to the last man, I shall fight to the last ditch" And Walter said, "If I were you I'd take the first aeroplane to Karachi"

And so India went in—and it was fortunately a bloodless takeover History will show I helped India's leaders give the impres-

sion that they behaved decently—much against their will, but they *did*

The only thing, I was unable to stop was the takeover

Q *Can we revert now to the Punjab Would it not have been wiser not to announce right away what the new Punjab boundary lines were going to be? To have waited two or three months till things got cooler?*

A I am glad you ask this question because it's an interesting one Let me put it this way I could not possibly have transferred power without knowing to whom I was transferring it We had to have the right sort of police, and police inspectors, and district magistrates, and district officers, *in situ* We knew there was going to be partition We knew approximately the lines, but we couldn't see the final adjustments from little local considerations It would have been worse to transfer power on hypothetical lines which they knew were going to be changed, than to do it on the actual lines

In fact, the reason why Evan Jenkins* wanted a forecast was to start moving the right sort of police, the right sort of people to the right side of the line If you'd waited for two months they would then have to have made the adjustment, then you would have found that where there was a Hindu police officer, magistrate, and so forth suddenly you were going to find that they were looking after an area which was going to belong to the Muslims, and vice versa It would have caused very great trouble

I delayed it as long as was physically possible in order to avoid an absolute blow-up on the day of the transfer, and in the hope that the spirit of rejoicing, which was absolutely universal (I knew it would be—I didn't know it was going to be so extreme)

*Sir Evan Jenkins, Governor of Punjab till 15 August, 1947

I thought that that would, in fact, pervade the whole of India and make them feel free, and they wouldn't have to worry But, in a way, the massacres were a tribute to British power, and the belief in British protection It was the removal of British protection which caused it, and I thought I'd stopped the British protection from being removed by having the agreement of Jinnah and his government, and of Nehru and his government, that we should have an independent Boundary Force under my control (under Auchinleck's* control as Supreme Commander). I thought that would be the outward and visible sign of the British Raj continuing their protection, and I thought that that would have the desired effect

Now, not only did I say just now that we couldn't have carried on and it would have broken down, but the result of that would have been very much worse, for everybody To be thoroughly candid and brutal and callous – I was afraid of not 200,000 people, but two or three million dead which could easily have happened with civil war, easily

Q *Were you afraid that the disease of violence would spread?*

A Ah, of course! Imagine for one moment that we'd failed to turn over power to an authentic constituted boundary division Then you would have had civil war, which would have spread, and it would have spread wherever there were mixed communities Don't forget the communities existed throughout India Everywhere, the Hindus and other communities would have chased the Muslims and the Muslims would have banded together and fought back, braver fighters than the Hindus, really

*Field-Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck, Commander-in-Chief in India till August, 1947, Supreme Commander administering partition of the Indian army till 30 November, 1947

Q *On the 7th of September, during the second Emergency Committee meeting, you said, "If we go down in Delhi, we are finished"*

A That's right I said it, and I meant it You know why? Delhi had the only administrative machine capable of running India Quite apart from myself and my own staff, this is where the centre of power was, this is where all the highest-call civil servants, both Indian and British, were carrying on

If Delhi had collapsed do not think India could have carried on as an entity It would have survived, but absolutely balkanized and broken up, everybody would have broken away And don't forget that Delhi was originally geographically situated in a corner of the Punjab, the disaffected area I'm glad of it It meant to say we were not escaping it We were right in it and if we could hold there, then we could hold the whole place If the capital had been remote, in Calcutta, or down in Madras or something, everybody would have said we were remote from the scene of trouble In fact, we were in the middle of it I was on my way down the whole time We all went out into the troubles

Q *How close was Delhi to collapsing?*

A Oh no, no I never for a moment had any fear The bodyguard behaved perfectly up to the end They behaved, were disciplined as hell I had plenty of Gurkhas and don't forget, in the long, long shot, I had something I didn't want to use but which I did have, all the British Army Auchinleck kept itching to be allowed to use those troops, but I said, "No, we won't have them used"

They were used, however, but without arms, when they went into the Purana Qila near that lovely zoo where so many refugees had been parked And they went in and did marvellous work.

The British Army left a tremendous name for unarmed help They were frightfully good But at the absolute extreme, I could have re-grouped it I could have even got, I believe, the Emergency Committee to agree that I could call in British troops in support of the Indian government That would have been worse than calling back the ex-Viceroy Remember One of the reasons why I accepted to take over again is that the Indian leaders knew that if I was there, I had the ultimate sanction—everybody knew I had the British Army under my hand Think what a temptation —which I resisted I never allowed it to be used, not even to protect the British retired officers in the valley of Srinagar when the tribes came through Baramulla, not even then would I let Auchinleck do it I took that risk there It was a big risk Where would I be if I'd had 100 of the old India Colonels and their wives' throats cut because I'd refused to let Auchinleck fly in his troops? And had failed to get my own troops there in time? These things haven't been touched on in any book I've read But at the same time, can you imagine if you had several thousand white faces that actually had to shoot people?

I never discussed the idea of using British troops with Nehru. I discussed it with Ismay and my own people I wouldn't discuss something like that, that I didn't want to do in any case, with Nehru You see, I was more Indian than most people realized and I saw the point from the very beginning very cleary

Q *There is some criticism from ex-British ICS which say that you didn't listen to the warnings of Abell* and Jenkins that the Punjab was going to erupt, but that you listened instead to Nehru who kept assuring you it wouldn't?*

A Neither part is correct Neither Jenkins nor Abell ever foresaw the eruption on the scale and lines it took place They fore-

*G.E B (later Sir George) Abell, Private Secretary to the Viceroy, (PSV),

saw trouble The trouble they foresaw would have been taken care of by the troops we sent up

That's why I sent them I listened to their warnings I didn't listen to Nehru Both Nehru and Jinnah were convinced they could hold it But I knew they couldn't guarantee it

What went wrong was the sheer simultaneous mass reaction which nobody foresaw Nobody foresaw that millions of people would upstake and change sides and be attacked the whole time That we didn't foresee We foresaw people on the boundaries making small adjustments It never occurred to us that people in Lahore would try to go across or vice versa That no one foresaw

I've yet to come across any criticism that has stood up

The British ICS men sincerely loved India but their love was fundamentally paternal That was one of the reasons for their success with the peasants—they wanted paternalism But they ultimately found it very hard to conceive of India functioning without them. And therefore, they tended to find reasons to rationalize our staying on 'just a bit more' I will tell you something if I was going to stay on, I couldn't have stayed on ten weeks Ten months It would have to be ten years How does Britain stay on for ten years? The war was over, troops wanted to get home, be demobilized How are you going to stay on against the wishes of the intelligentsia, the leaders of the Congress Party? What makes anyone think that law and order would have been any better after ten years of the British fighting against the Indians?

The difference between me and those people was that I saw only too clearly what the alternatives were and I took the only course open Nobody I've met has told me what they'd do to implement what had to be done otherwise

Thinking back after 25 years, and particularly since you stimulate my thoughts, I don't think I would have done anything different now after 25 years with the available knowledge, even

with hindsight

If I could have foreseen those ten million people moving what would I have done? Could I have held up the course of events? Could I have stopped the transfer of power? And what would have been the advantage of stopping it?

I don't believe I would have done anything different

If I had any success at all, it was because I so speeded up events, momentum took them on I accept responsibility for that But I think I was right

Q *Before 15 August, did you ever discuss with Jinnah and Nehru about possible transfers of population in the Punjab?*

A From memory, I'd say yes I think we did talk about trying to move them artificially They rejected it. Here my memory is a bit at fault, but I do not think I asked either of them at official interviews which I recorded I remember discussing it, and that both of them had the same feeling "Our states must be capable of looking after the minorities We're built on that " Jinnah just as keen as Nehru

Q *There is some criticism about the unrealistic command structure of the boundary force The force should have been divided into two parts one for each side*

A I was afraid that if you divided them, making one responsible, each side, you always get (and the British are the worst offenders in this respect) tremendous loyalty to the particular people you're looking after

You'd then have had the two British Generals squabbling, and at each others' throats You know? "You're not looking after my people!" and so forth It wouldn't have worked I wasn't overlooked, I'm the chap who looks at every course before I can make up my mind It sounds as though I just take a lot of serious

decisions, but I try and explain to all the way through I am a man who is logical I was responsible for taking precautions I was a one-man band I did it all myself I decided to send to Punjab the biggest force I could muster which was reliable I chose the unit personally, with the C-in-C, F M Auchinleck Those units which were reliable—they had British officers, had mixed communities, or better still, were not involved, such as the Gurkhas, and don't forget, the Madrasis were not involved, the South Indians, the Bombay units were not involved But unfortunately the Punjab was where the warrior tribes came from I decided that the appropriate thing to do would be to man the partition border with a great lot of troops

Now, peace-time, 55,000 hand-picked troops was a force in excess of anything anybody had ever dreamt of putting up as a precaution against something happening which was not even foretold That's a very large force, very highly organized, very carefully disposed

I know we should have tried to transfer power without any loss of life whatever, of course I was quite sure we'd have some. I didn't think we'd have as many, and we certainly did not have as much as people think we did The great test is, with hindsight, 25 years after the event—what would I have done differently? Bloody conceited thing to say I wouldn't have done anything differently Not with the knowledge at our disposal then do you follow me? It's not good being frightfully clever with hindsight

But, let's give a bit of hindsight Let us say I saw some troubles What more could I have done? Well, I'll repeat what I already told you I'd have got leaders together and said, "We are faced with this problem What do you wish me to do?" They were going to be sovereign governments it was their responsibility. All I could have said was, "We won't transfer power " That they wouldn't have liked, wouldn't have accepted I've never met anybody, truthfully, who was a student of Indian affairs whose opinion is worth listening to who said anything to the contrary.

The second reason for the origin of the massacre is this This dates back centuries, and came about through the Muslim occupation of India by the Moghuls who brought in the Muslims, who were the occupying power, and were hated by the Hindus And when, as the British influence was going to be lifted they, like the Maharajas in the Indian states, were going to be without the protection of the British

They were, therefore, terrified of being left on the wrong side of the border, although, in the case of the Muslims, somewhere like half, or just under half of them were going to be left in India, anyhow—we couldn't get them out Remember that It was only on the borders that we could do it And we were bullied into doing that by Jinnah—I thought, without any adequate reason, but there was nothing you could do about it because he just threatened civil war, which he knew he had the power to bring about after the 1946 direct action day in Calcutta

So we were left with a position which had been created over generations The British have been accused of "divide and rule," that by keeping them apart they were able to rule the people. This was a question as Penderel Moon said, of "divide and quit" Could we therefore quit, without leaving behind unprotected people?

Well, now, in order to give them protection, we not only had divided the army into Muslim and non-Muslim entities—but we had this mixed Boundary Force under a very high-class general called Pete Rees who commanded the 9th Indian Division with me, which was there to try and keep the peace Those were the ingredients which brought these massacres about The fear of being left on the wrong side of the border, and then being oppressed.

Q *Didn't you encounter special problems with some of the minorities, the Sikhs for example?*

A The Sikhs were indeed a particular problem They're good-looking, tall, they pride themselves on being magnificent warriors and they are, under certain conditions, but not under all Not very good in defeat, if pushed into a corner, but when everything's going well, they're magnificent soldiers Very little commonsense or brains The only leader I had to deal with politically was called Baldev Singh,* and he was as a delight, cheery nonentity There are many stories told about him which are apocryphal When he became Minister of Defence, he was allotted a driver and a car, and the car broke down and he said to the driver (in English, which they always spoke), "What's the trouble—repair it at once!"—"Sir, I cannot I need a screwdriver "—"Screwdriver? I've already got one driver, I don't want two " Another time the driver drove very fast over one of these drainpipes, practically threw him out of his seat, and he said, "Why did you not sound your horn?"

He invariably did what I said and was very grateful for any advice I gave him The Sikhs! They were so stupid, it was they who came to me first, to ask me to partition the Punjab although I told them, "It's my recollection that the Sikhs are living along the line on which I shall be drawing the partition "—"Ah, but we don't want to be with Pakistan "—"But the partition line is bound to go largely through your areas, because you can't avoid it "—"Oh no!" They still wanted it I said—"I think you're very unwise to ask for it It would have been much better to have objected to it and then tried to bully me and other people to give you more consideration But now you've asked for it You've had it!" That' the sort of level we were dealing with

Q. *If you had gone more slowly, could you have avoided this tragedy?*

*Baldev Singh, Sikh leader, Minister for Defence in the Government of the dominion of India

Some people have suggested the contrary, like Beaverbrook, in particular, but he was running a campaign against me He was trying to prove that I was murdering all these people He had people like this creature Mosley whom he employed on a salary and who wrote this book at Beaverbrook's behest to try to blacken me personally. Of course, they would prove anything The technique was to say I was charming, I had this great charisma, I was a marvellous chap and so forth, and if I hadn't been so marvellous, the disaster wouldn't have been so great because people wouldn't have listened to me That sort of thing I have been made responsible for a huge loss of life India, even in those days, had over 400 million people, it was one-fifth of humanity The loss of life which had been widely exaggerated, between one, two and three million—and even Churchill and Beaverbrook lent their names to this ludicrous, excessive estimate —was in fact, in my opinion, round about 200,000 Plus or minus 50,000

That's the estimate given me at the time I've not seen anything else to alter my opinion Sir Penderel Moon, who was just on the edge, who could see it all, has given as his opinion 200,000 Sir Chandulal Trivedi* when he spoke to me, said he thought it was more like 150,000 (he was right in the centre of the Punjab) Therefore, broadly speaking, the losses were about one-tenth of the popular estimate

Now my conscience, of course, has all these lives on it to a certain extent But in the balance of payments, on conscience, I think I am pretty well up, because Lord Wavell† himself told me I had saved well over a million lives by giving up five per cent of my military shipping space to bring in wheat and rice at the time of the terrible Bengal famine of 1943 when several million people died of starvation

*First Indian Governor of Punjab

†Lord Wavell, Field Marshal Sir Archibald, Viceroy of India from 1942-47

Now if you just say "200,000 people died", it sounds terrible. But what is 200,000? Out of 400 million? That's one person in 2,000 isn't it? Work it out It is 0 01 per cent, something of that order It is a fractional percentage That's the first thing to realize.

Secondly, wide, vast areas of India were absolutely undisturbed The whole of the south, most of the east and west Try and remember that Bengal was undisturbed The hotbed was on the borders, and the Punjab—created, I'm sorry to tell you, almost entirely by people I love so much—those beloved, brave idiots, the Sikhs, who really set about cutting up the Muslims, who reacted, not just against the Sikhs, but against the Hindus as well Now, we always go back to the same question Could it have been avoided? You really have to get this it wasn't foreseen by anybody, at any level, at any time Sir Khizar Tiwana* had some idea of what might happen, but I wasn't told about it He was the first person who told me *after* the trouble that he did think there might be some But I had no warning, no reason to take any further precautions People thought I was taking unnecessary precautions, you must know

Now, if you want to find the origin of the massacres, they come from years of communal strife and hatred If you think that's odd, disgraceful, against humanity, let's look at the Christians in Northern Ireland Here you have men and women who worship the same God exactly, whose differences are purely in the form of the service, but not in the beliefs, who are at each other's throats In India these people don't even worship the same God! They haven't the same outlook! There's far more excuse for them to riot than there is for people in Northern Ireland The Christians cannot point the finger of scorn, remember that

*Nawab Malik Sir Khizar Hayat Khan Tiwana, Premier of the Punjab from 1942-47

me to ask me, once more, to reinforce Sir Frederick Burrows'* original suggestion that I should declare Calcutta a free city which should belong neither to India, nor to Pakistan I had turned down that suggestion before But Suhrawardy came to appeal to me once more He said, "There'll be absolute bloodshed if you don t If it's a free city, you can hold the position "

I said, "That's the only good reason I've yet had, but I don't think you will have bloodshed there because I'm sending Gandhi down "

"Oh," he said "that is marvellous Can I go with him?" I said, "You ask him "

I immediately saw the possibilities of such a "marriage" because the trouble with Gandhi was that although he had enormous influence over the Hindus, with the Muslims the only form of influence he had, really, was that they thought he was their protector, which he was But I didn't think an appeal from Gandhi to the Muslims to keep quiet, in those parts of Calcutta where they were in the majority, would work. So I thought it would be a very good thing to have the aroused Muslim leader in Calcutta alongside him It was the oddest assortment in the world I mean if ever there were a saint and a sinner together! What a contrast between this very worldly, wealthy, power-seeker and corrupt political boss, and this impoverished, rather pathetic, rather sweet, saintly Hindu, who had the highest motive for trying to prevent partition And those two went together! I cannot begin to try and choose a parallel, nor think of it, but it would be rather like Jayne Mansfield† and the Pope going off somewhere! Inconceivable, this extraordinary mixture The mere bringing of the two of them together staggered everybody Suhrawardy would have done nothing by himself Gandhi might have pulled it off by himself, but I think the addition of Suhrawardy was a

*Sir Frederick Burrows last British Governor of Bengal

†Buxom blonde Hollywood st_r of the 1950s

tremendous plus from a public relations point of view Suhrawardy was a leader more powerful among his own people than Jinnha, because Jinnha was not Bengali He could hold the Muslims in order if Gandhi held the Hindu majority It was the conjunction of the two that did the trick, that was the miracle If the trouble had started in Calcutta, the Punjab would have looked a bed of roses compared with the blood which would have flowed there, and that was the great risk I took.

I'll tell you one other thing I am the chap who never says no to an idea I look at it To show you as President of the Royal Automobile Club, I just gave the 1973 trophy of the year to Sir Christopher Cocknell for inventing the Hovercraft At this big dinner, in reply, he said, "Lord Mountbatten probably has no idea how appropriate it is that he should hand me this If it hadn't been for him, there would have been no Hovercraft. I tried everybody, I tried all the big business, I tried the government departments I tried everybody. Nobody would give me any money or support to pursue the Hovercraft And then I remembered Lord Mountbatten's boast was that he never said no to an idea without having it looked at I sent it to him He looked at it and he immediately said he'd back it up, and the Navy would order it, and he put the Hovercraft on the map"

Now, I only mention this because it's true, I don't say no to an idea until I've had it looked at Most people say no to an idea first and don't really look at it This is one of the differences in my approach which may help you evaluate my relation in Calcutta After all, some of the craziest ideas work

I think that someone like Wavell would have turned down the Calcutta idea flat I looked at it and suddenly I thought, "By God, it's good idea", and we did it

Q. *How did you put the idea to Gandhi?*

A I told him I knew how unhappy he was about partition and I

A First of all, we couldn't have gone more slowly, for reasons which I'll put to you now The Interim Government, which I inherited and didn't create, which had, from memory, six Congress, three minorities, that's nine, against five Muslim League—was a government which couldn't operate For the simple reason that it couldn't operate that way When I realized that it was breaking down I then—somewhat cleverly, with the help of V P Menon,—invented the idea of these shadow ministries, and that held the position, which was steadily disintegrating When I named August 15, I admit I chose the anniversary of the surrender of the Japanese in Singapore but I had to name a date, and it was a good date But, and this is the point I really want to make, it couldn't have lasted much longer I had an absolute—not so much intuition, it was fairly obvious that it couldn't last much longer—but belief that if I could announce an early date, I could hope to hold on to that If I'd said, vaguely, "We won't do it until June 1948"—which I could have done, the thing would have disintegrated There wouldn't have been any hope.

Q *In late July 1947, that is about two weeks before the date for the transfer of power, you met with Gandhi and you begged him to go to Calcutta to help you maintain peace there by his presence "Go to Calcutta," you urged, "you'll be my one-man boundary force there" How did this idea come to your mind?*

A I had two reasons for doing it One was the subconscious, suppressed reason I knew that the transfer of power was the culmination of all that Gandhi had worked for, and in the process, he'd had India partitioned, which was all that he he'd tried to avoid In fact, it's like giving birth to a child and then having it cut in half, on delivery And I knew it would be very painful to him He would not be able to share in the pleasure of the people and I thought that if I could find a good excuse to get him out of Delhi where all the excitement was, and point out

that the path of duty lay elsewhere, that he would be grateful Now I don't believe that if that hadn't been a subconsciously understood thing between us, that he would willingly have gone But I think he was relieved to be given, by me, a mission, which took him away and gave him a very good reason to be away

I said to him, "I shall explain why you're not in Delhi" In other words, he knew he could go with honour, that he could be away during these days which would be painful for him Now, I had another reason I was not such a fool as not to realize that the partition of India could not fail to bring with it certain strains and troubles But nobody, none of the Indian leaders or politicians, none of my CID nor any of my experts, nobody forecast, foresaw or foretold the extent of what was going to happen

I knew trouble would take place mainly in partitioned areas in the Punjab and in Bengal In Bengal, the main focal point for disorders was, of course, Calcutta That is where the Muslim League, in August 1946, had that direct action day as a foretaste of what civil war meant for the Muslims

Calcutta was the second greatest city in the Empire, second only in population to London itself Although it had fine, wide parks, avenues and shopping areas, if there'd been trouble there, I knew I couldn't possibly hold it with troops It's bad enough in North Ireland today It would have been impossible in Calcutta You can't really control serious disorders in a city with troops And remember, I had committed 55,000 of my best troops to Punjab I had almost nothing left for Calcutta. just the garrison one brigade only

That's why I thought of sending Gandhi there as my one-man boundary force Just before I saw him received the visit of a jovial scoundrel I rather liked called Suhrawardy * He was the P M of Bengal by election, and he was a Muslim He had come to see

*H S Suhrawardy, Chief Minister of Bengal from 1946

people were going to up sticks and move together, because they were asking for trouble If they'd stayed put there was some chance we could look after them—the fatal thing was when they upped sticks and then put themselves out on unprotected roads and in caravans—just an absolute target for these villains—on both sides That's what went wrong and we couldn't control it

You've never seen anything like it I flew over them, the entire roadwork of India was like a bank holiday crowd, choked from end to end Look at some of the photographs In a refugee train, they were not only in the compartments, they were lying on top of each other, like in a sardine-box They were hanging on to the windows, standing on the running-boards and standing up on the roofs of the trains It looked like a living sort of caterpillar

Q *After the transfer of power, you decided to go up to Simla with your family for a well-earned rest But suddenly, you found yourself back in Delhi Why?*

A Just after the Transfer of Power ceremonies were over, I went to my study to open the box which contained Radcliffe's partition boundaries awards And then, I called in the Indian and Pakistan leaders Liaquat Ali Khan was up from Pakistan and I put them in the Viceroy's Executive Council Chamber on two sides—Indians one side, Pakistanis the other As they went through I could tell from the expressions of indignation that they were pretty well equally annoyed

And I said, "I can detect from each of you that you are pretty annoyed That's fine, I couldn't expect you to be pleased, no one's going to give three rousing cheers for things they do not like Every expression of indignation on one side should have been an expression of pleasure on the other side, but as far as I'm concerned it sounds to me quite fair "

Then I said, "I'm going up to Simla to rest " And so we

moved up to Simla in a big way, an official move, and while there, the migrations started which produced this very unattractive aspect of the Indians, which I thought was theirs, but now I think is just as unattractive in New York or anywhere else, of being vicious and violent

The Indians had no sort of corner in violence, brutality and horrors They're just human beings their worst when they're roused. And then these troubles started. And I wasn't going to move, it was up to them They'd got their independence, they knew what they were doing 55,000 officers and men of the Punjab Boundary Force to keep law and order, as much as possible I'd sent Gandhi down to hold the position in Calcutta, I wasn't going to move And then V P Menon got on the telephone to me I was resting in Simla trying to recover, writing that book on my family relationship tables, and I was riding and going round looking at places and reading, of course, the reports that were coming in—and Menon said, "Your Excellency must return to Delhi"

I said, "Don't be silly, V P, you must come up here—it can't be essential for me to come back I'm a Constitutional Governor-General If my Cabinet has something which they wish me to countersign have them send the documents up here I'll countersign!"

I can't remember whether he rang me again or whether he then said, "Well, as a matter of fact the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister want you to come down"

"Why?"

"They want more than your advice, they want your help"

"Well, I'm not coming, tell them"

He said, "If Your Excellency isn't down within 24 hours, don't bother to come It'll be too late, we will have lost India"

"All right, V P, old swine," I said, "I'll come down" We ordered the train and down we went.

was unhappy, too I kept on telling this, telling him this is not my plan I told him I realized there was the possibility of bad elements making trouble There might be some rioting, there might even be some massacres If it happens in Calcutta, we're sunk, I can do nothing I have pulled together 55,000 officers and men for the Punjab, but in Calcutta I can do nothing There's brigade down there, but I don't even propose to reinforce the brigade If Calcutta goes up in flames, well it goes up in flames

"Yes," he said, "my friend, this is the fruit of your policy of partition "

I said, "It may be the fruit of my policy of partition bul I keep telling you that except for your one idea of Jinnah forming a government which you couldn't get through Congress, nobody, not even you, has given me any alternative idea Power must be transferred, we can't go on So," I said, "you could do, I think, the greatest single act of your life if you went down to Calcutta and became my one-man boundary force Suhrawardy will give you Muslim backing "

He was tickled pink with the idea the one-man boundary force! 55,000 officers and men on one side and Gandhi on the other All this rather appealed to him So it wasn't difficult to get his fires stoked up And he wanted to get out of Delhi He went down there and he did an amazing job

Now, I just want to ask you What would have happened if I hadn't had him there? Oh, that would have been a mess People of my staff thought it was one of my eccentric, rather crazy ideas You must remember we were working from hand to mouth under high pressure I was dealing with each problem as it came up I did not visualise and I was not advised and nobody did visualise, nobody, I repeat nobody, told me we were going to have massacres on this scale They had said there'd be dissatisfaction, there'd be riots, along these areas alongside the border, there'd be trouble This trouble many people thought I was

overestimating 55,000 men for Punjab only, hand-picked, all of them I don't think it entered anybody's mind that we'd under-insured And indeed, if I'd had 100,000 troops, I still wouldn't have stopped it

In other words, nobody warned me what we were in for, because nobody foresaw it Nehru didn't Gandhi didn't Jinnah didn't CID didn't Don't let anybody tell you they foresaw this, because they didn't Or if they did, and didn't tell me, they were criminals

Q *If you had had warning, what would you have done differently?*

A I've not been asked that before I tell you what I would have done I would have got Jinnah, Nehru, Gandhi, Vallabhbhai Patel, Liaquat Ali Khan, Baldev Singh, I'd have got the whole lot in, that mattered I'd have said to them, "I've got this warning, which none of you has given me before and I think it's serious What are we going to do?"

I'd have put the responsibility on to them I took all the precautions I did in the Punjab where, clearly, the movement was apt to take place There was no reason for a big movement in Calcutta I thought there'd be riots but I did not realize at the time I sent Gandhi down there that if he hadn't gone down there, if the phenomenon of the Punjab repeated itself in Bengal, we would have been in the most awful mess So I didn't realize how much of a mess we were going to be in at the time I sent him down, so I don't want to take too much credit for this But in the Punjab, things got to be different I'll repeat it until my last breath I can honestly tell you that nobody, but nobody, gave me any sort of warning The precautions I took were my own natural, prudent precautions against the trouble that might arise But it never occurred to me that, not thousands, nor tens of thousands, nor hundreds of thousands, but millions of

I said, "I don't want the Minister at all, I want the civil servants who are doing it I want the Chief of Police, I want the head of the Indian medical services, I want my wife, who will immediately set up a council for all the voluntary organizations, and she will represent them **The Secretary will be General Erskine-Crum,*** my Conference Secretary The minutes will be kept by British stenographers The will be typed in the course of the meeting and handed to people as they go away and be acted on at once In every case, you invite me to do this "

"Yes we invite you "

"Nobody will know that you asked me to tell you what to do. All you're doing is you've left me in the chair The Prime Minister sits on my right, the Deputy on my left, and every time I'll always go through the motions of consulting you, and whatever I say, you're not going to argue with me, we haven't got time. I'll say, 'I'm sure you wish me to do this,' and you'll say, 'Yes, please ' That's all I want I don't want you to say anything else "

Patel said, "Well, can't we have. "

I said, "Not if you're going to delay things You can go through the motions of arguing with me so long as you finally do what I say **Do you want me to run the country or are you going to try and make a mess of it yourself?"**

"Ah, all right," he said "You can run the country "

It was the most extraordinary conversation I've ever had and that's why I didn't record it It's a very dangerous thing, really. This is probably the first time it's been recorded

I told very few of my staff I stuck to the fiction that Nehru and Patel had invited me to come down because they'd decided to set up an Emergency Committee in the Cabinet (They didn't even know what an Emergency Committee was) They'd asked me to take the chair, and I had with some reluctance, agreed,

*Lt -Col V F Erskine Crum, Private Secretary to the Governor-General of India from August 15, 1947

provided they would sit on each side of me and tell me what they wanted me to do They'd asked if my secretary would do the notes, and I'd said yes, if it was convenient, and so on

Next morning at 9 30, I had the first Emergency Committee meeting in the Viceroy's Executive Council Chamber By then we had all the maps set up, next door, and I'd put General Rees who had been Commander of the Punjab Boundary Force, to take it over, with a large staff, and his civilian personal assistant was Pamela She kept all his notes for him and was a very, very useful person

There were about thirty people in all First of all, we all went into the map room, and we saw what was happening You see, nobody knew where these incidents were occurring We had reconnaissance aircraft out, from dawn, plotting the positions of all the main migrations, and don't forget, it was no uncommon thing to have a single group of 10,000 people walking along the road When the trains went, the people herded together on the roofs—most extraordinary thing—hanging everywhere And, there were these attacks going on

So we got the first picture They had no idea, they were staggered Of course, when they'd gone, I set up a military intelligence organization to get the information I wanted, and also set up communications, a proper staff organization It was just like a Supreme Headquarters in war More like an operational H Q really, handling a campaign

Some examples Someone said it was absolutely vital to get some medical supplies to somewhere up in the North I said, "All right I want two aeroplanes ready, to fly this up "

"Right "

"And I shall want to have a medical team Ready?"

"Right!"

The next thing was, we had to move a large part of some stores I said, "We'll do it by train Director of Railways? A train to go from there to there "

Q *In his book V.P said he invented that Patel had asked you to come back*

A He told me Patel had asked for me and that Nehru had agreed Oh yes, it was very clever, for that was the only reason I came. Patel could have asked me, I wasn't going to come "Well, if you can't come in 24 hours it will be too late " That clinched it He wouldn't have said it unless it was serious, so I wasn't going to argue The moment I arrived, V P Menon, having heard I was coming down, took it upon himself to deliver a message to these two saying I wanted to see them I don't think I'd even said it As a result, when I arrived there they were, which impressed me—I discovered afterwards that they'd been manoeuvred into Government House by V P and I said, "What's happening?" They gave me a vivid description.

Q *You have no record in your notes of this conversation?*

A I'll tell you why you haven't got this It wasn't done at the time, it was too hot What's going to come is very hot, and I wouldn't put it down **It's only now, after 25 years, that I can tell it**

They were very gloomy and they said that the migrations had exceeded their worst fears, the Punjab Boundary Force couldn't compete, it was all right Gandhiji was holding the fort in Calcutta but in the Punjab it was terrible. Delhi, they pointed out, was geographically a part of the Punjab, and was carved out of Jaipur state, do you remember, on the edge of the Punjab "and in Delhi itself we're having violent scenes "

The thing was deteriorating and they said, "We don't know how to hold it" I said, "Why not? You've taken over power " And Nehru said, **"While you were exercising the highest command in the war, we were in prison You're a professional, a high-level administrator. We're not amateurs, we just know nothing You can't just turn over this country to us, having stayed with**

us all our lives with all your knowledge and experience, then leave us, without any experience or knowledge of how to do it Will you run the country?" (That's the extraordinary thing)

"You must understand," Nehru said, "You've got to take it We pledge ourselves. We'll do whatever you say We'll be far more obedient than when you were Viceroy Please, take over the country "

I said, "Well, look, it's terrible, for if it were known that you'd turned over the country to me, you'd be finished You'd be a laughing-stock The Indians keep back the British Viceroy and then turn the country back to him? This is out of the question!"

They said, **"Well, we may find ways of disguising this, but if you don't do it, we can't manage it "**

"All right," I said, very reluctantly "I'll do it, and of course I can pull the country together because I do know how to do it, but I think you must all agree that nobody must know about this Nobody must know you have made this extravagant offer to me, or these requests, we shall find a solution which will be done in such a way that it will appear to be constitutionally normal, correct and proper

"So you two will ask me to set up an Emergency Committee in the Cabinet, and I will agree Will you do that?"

"Yes "

"All right You've asked me I will take the chair because you invite me to?"

"Yes, we invite you "

"The Emergency Committee will consist of the people I will nominate "

"Oh, we must have the whole Cabinet!"

"The whole Cabinet?" I said, "It would be disastrous I don't want all your odds and sods, I just want the key people And I want the Director of Civil Aviation, the Director of Railways "

"You can have the Minister "

"Right!"

All this was done, and recorded, and they got the minutes, next morning I said, "Now, reports At what time did the aeroplanes get there?"

"We've had some difficulty in finding an aeroplane."

I said, "Haven't they gone yet?"

"They haven't got them in Delhi "

I said, "Director of Civil Aviation, you go down to the airport You will remain at the airport, you will not eat, drink, sleep or anything You won't move until you can come back personally to me and say, 'Those two aeroplanes have left ' Do you understand? He went out as red-faced as an Indian ever can be and disappeared

To the Director of Railways I asked, "Has that train left?" "Oh, we've had some difficulty in marshalling the train " I said, "You will go down to the main railway station in Delhi and you will remain there until you personally see the train together, and take the guard's whistle in your mouth, and blow the whistle, and when you've blown the whistle, you come back and report to me You see?"

This is the way I dealt with it, and my God, they got the wind up because the next day everything was going like that They went from bullock-cart pace to jet aircraft pace!—and as Nehru said, it was the most valuable lesson in government he'd ever had.

They had no idea how to run things like that. Things really moved, and the reason it was kept so secret was that it would have been disastrous if it had been known, in that generation, that they'd handed back the government to me. But what great men would have had the sense to do it? Lesser men would have let the thing go.

So now, I say, it was a tribute That's what could have happened We pulled that together So I did save their bacon, and there I must hand it to V P Menon—he bullied me down to do it.

With that one phrase I wish you'd known him, he was a great, great man The poorest of the poor, he was self-educated, and he was so low he got Rs 30 a month He wasn't allowed to sleep in the same rest-house as the English members of the staff He had to go out and sleep in one of the native huts And he was a really great man, marvellous man I loved him very, very dearly

The way these Emergency Committee notes were produced was fascinating, because we had these English stenographers alongside, and they, from memory, used to actually go out and type out, item by item, the minutes, so that very often the first dozen decisions were handed to members as they left the meeting And everything was out within an hour. And, by God, it kept them terrified People wouldn't dare come to a meeting unless they'd done what they were told to do, they used to ring up in advance and say, "Please, tell the Secretary we haven't been able to "—you know?

The Council Chamber was a real war H Q There were flags stuck in the maps where everything was taking place, exactly like a war The Indians had never seen this presentation They were absolutely flabbergasted We gripped the thing overnight, from chaos to complete order And, mind you, only just in time, it was on the verge of boiling over. It had already reached Delhi My ADC Peter Howes went out and picked up corpses every day and got his white uniform covered in blood When my wife went to one of the hospitals, the guards stopped her and said, "You can't go through, the hospital's under fire," and she said "You can't stop me", and she went straight through them They held their fire when they saw her, and she walked in—came out again, went back, and the firing started again It was terrible

Q *The accession of the Maharaja of Kashmir to India was one of the bigger problems you had in getting the Princes to give up*

their sovereignty Can you remember some of your negotiations with Hari Singh of Kashmir?

A Remember that Hari Singh was a very old friend He was on the Prince of Wales's staff as Heir Apparent of the United Kingdom of Kashmir and Jammu He was a polo player, and quite a pleasant, social person He had, of course, perversions. He had an unsavoury affair with a Captain Arthur, which you've probably read about There was a great lawsuit, because this Captain Arthur was accused of blackmailing a Mr X Mr X was the Maharaja of Kashmir (in those days it was possible to preserve anonymity), and this was because he accused him of perversion

Now, I just want to say that this man was a very weak personality, he always was He leaned entirely on the Viceroy, and now, the Viceroy's advice was about to be removed He felt that this advice, when the Viceroy was no longer there to implement the results, was therefore something he couldn't rely on as he used to In July 1947, I paid a state visit to Kashmir I mean we went up there, the full panoply, with presents, and guards of honour, and bands and everything else

We had dined, a great big formal dinner And you know the Viceroy always sat in the host's place, like the King in England. So naturally, I sat in the Maharaja's place, and he sat opposite me. But I had the head of the table By my side was a hidden bell push under the table About halfway through the dinner, before the sweet was served, I leant back, like this, and my leg came into contact with the bell-push, which rang Upon which the band stopped playing and immediately struck up, "God Save The King", and they shouted, "Stop, stop, stop!"

Anyhow, Hari Singh had got the river Trika stocked with trout from England and Scotland There was very nice trout fishing there He'd take me out every day, every day he drove me himself, and I sat in front with him in the station wagon going up the Trika. We drove along, so that I could speak freely to

him I then really took him apart, nobody could hear me

I said, "Hari Singh, you've got to listen to me I'm an old friend of yours You've got to make up your mind. I have come up with full authority from the present government of the future Dominion of India (basically Patel, but he'd got the agreement of Nehru) I've come to tell you that if you decide to accede to Pakistan, they'll think it a natural thing to do, because the majority of your population are Muslims It'll not only cause no ill-feeling, but they'll give you all the support and help they can"

"I don't want to accede to Pakistan on any account," he said

"Well," I said, "it's up to you I think you might be wise to accede, because the majority of your people are Muslims"

"Yes," he said, "but don't forget that with Sheikh Abdullah,* who's madly pro-Nehru, most of my people would really wish to join India"

"All right, then, in that case—join India! If you do, I will personally see that one or two divisions of infantry are sent up which will absolutely preserve the integrity of your boundaries"

"I don't want to join India either, because, if so, I would feel that perhaps that's not what the people wanted I want to be independent"

I said, "You can't be independent I'm sorry You are, in fact, a landlocked country of great size and not a very big population (only about seven or eight million inhabitants) You've got two rival countries which are always going to be at daggers drawn. those are your neighbours. You're going to be pulled into a scrimmage You will end up by being a battlefield between the Hindus and the Muslims That's what'll happen to you And you'll lose your throne"

He didn't seem to be able to understand it I went on, every day I described it in more detail I said, "Why not take the thing

*President of the States National Conference

out of your own hands and say, 'I will consult the will of the people?' Release Sheikh Abdullah, whom you've got in prison, and have a quick plebiscite Or have a show of hands in public places You say, that with Sheikh Abdullah released, they'd probably want to join the Congress Party I think they would. They'd join India " "Ah, but we don't want Sheikh Abdullah in power He would then be against me, there'd be socialism and so forth," "Well," I said, "you can't live in isolation. You've got to think about things " I went on and on and on, spent three days with him and at the end of the third day, I thought that I'd got him to the point of seeing he had to make a decision by the 15th of August, and it was open to him which way he did it and how he did it And I said, "Now, I think I ought to get Kak, your Prime Minister, and we'll talk about it I'll get my Resident and I've got my Private Secretary with me here" (it was George Abell, I think) "and you'll have Kak, and you and me Quite a small party and we'll then just formalize the agreement we've come to, and keep some notes Then you'll know where you are, and you'll at least have the benefit of my advice, which you want. Then, if you follow it, you've got the backing of that advice and I'll do what I can to help If you disregard my advice, it'll also be recorded It'll be up to you "

"Thank you," he said, "very good idea " And of course, on the last morning, when it was all set, we had everything decided, how to do it, and it was quite simple It was going to be "His Excellency and His Highness agree that Kashmir and Jammu would accede to one future Dominion or the other before the transfer of power on the 15th of August " It was noted that Kashmir acceding to Pakistan appeared the wisest course If on the other hand, they decided to accede to India, the Indians would send up one or two infantry divisions to prevent interference Pakistan might not like that decision, but they wouldn't be able to interfere In either case, there'd be no bloodshed If H H didn't wish to take the personal responsibility of making

the decision, he could consult his people, either by a plebiscite or, if time did not permit, by a show of hands He could go round himself, with, say Sheikh Abdullah or someone else, and they could put up their hands, and you could take photographs and see which way it went

It would be something that would be convincing And if he went to Pakistan, I had the assurance of Mr Jinnah, to whom I'd spoken about this, that he would be welcomed with open arms and given an honoured place within the new Pakistan And he'd be there for good

If he went to India he was assured of the protection of India and he would be treated with honour there, also The only thing that was fatal to him was to procrastinate and not make up his mind, because that would mean that he would then be a non-viable, landlocked state whose two neighbours were at each others' throats, and eventually he would be the battlefield

That was what I wanted to record, and then try and get him to express an opinion But this last meeting never took place An ADC came and said H H was indisposed It was, of course, absolute baloney

Q *You left without seeing him again?*

A Without seeing him The doctor wouldn't let me see him. Ismay went up again immediately afterwards, ostensibly on a holiday but really to urge, on my behalf, once more, that it was still not too late to accede to one side or the other But again he failed

That's how the whole trouble started So I've got no sympathy at all Don't forget that Nehru himself agreed to this plebiscite and therefore behaved correctly Don't forget that Pakistan did, also I told you when I very nearly solved the problem, when I got Liaquat Ali to come and stay with me in Viceroy's House? And how we had a meeting in Liaquat Ali's sitting-

room? (The house was so immense, that every suite had its own sitting-room) I took Nehru up, as a matter of psychology and propaganda, to Liaquat Ali's private sitting-room, and I said, "Can we come in Liaquat?" He said, "Yes " So he and Nehru and Ismay and I sat there We had a friendly discussion, at which we resolved the problem

Q *When did you get the first news of tribesmen sweeping down into Kashmir?*

A At a reception on October 23, I think I met V P Menon or was called out by him to the telephone, or was told by him as I was going there I went straight to Nehru and said, "This is a very serious situation. Let's look at it, let's face it Kashmir is an independent place We have no right to go to its defence I know that we shall have Auchinleck wanting to send a British brigade up there, he's bound to want to, and I'm going to tell him, no Whether Pakistan's helping or not is quite immaterial, but we've got to face the tribesmen We've got to stop that You cannot intervene at the request of the Maharaja unless in fact he accedes " Then I said, "We'll send up V P Menon with the instrument of accession If he signs it, then we'll hold. While this is going on, we will have a meeting of the Defence Committee and we'll get authorities to set up the intervention This is what I'm best at, I know my stuff I'll get all the aeroplanes from all over India flown into Delhi We'll collect all the independent troops such as Gurkha brigades, we'll fly them up I think we can just do it Just like that, in the nick of time "

"Agreed," said Nehru

V P Menon then dashed up and as a result the Maharaja signed his accession And he made the appeal to us for troops By the time V P came back, I'd made up my mind how to handle it I said to Nehru, ' Here's the instrument of accession As a Constitutional Governor-General, I'll only sign it at your

request " But I also added, "I'll only countersign it on condition you offer a plebiscite " Then we discussed the plebiscite. Nehru made one stipulation to which I agreed That this could only be done in peaceful conditions, with the tribesmen withdrawn, which was very reasonable Can you imagine the Pakistanis being so stupid as not to withdraw the tribesmen? I told Liaquat, "All you've got to do is pull out Have the plebiscite, and you'll win You'll get in again By refusing to pull out the tribesmen, you are playing into Nehru's hands He's already got himself into trouble with his followers for risking a plebiscite on my account "

I must tell you honestly I wanted Kashmir to join Pakistan. For one simple reason, it made Pakistan more viable They had 85 per cent Muslims I persuaded Patel with some difficulty to let me give the Maharaja his assurances that India would not object if he acceded to Pakistan I was miserable when the whole thing went wrong but Hari Singh was such a bloody fool Fancy going up and saying I have it here from the Government of India that they just want you to decide which way you go If you accede to Pakistan, they will not hold it against you, there will be perfectly good, friendly relations I had official approval of the future Government of India agreeing to his going to Pakistan and there'd be no ill-will.

You see, I was always convinced East Pakistan would never work The whole concept of two different peoples being held together over all those miles by the same religion was absolute nonsense **But West Pakistan was something else, I wanted it to work, I wanted it to be viable. After all, I was responsible for it. I wanted Kashmir with them I didn't want to muck up my own creation, for God's sake**

Q *How did you organize the intervention of Indian troops in Kashmir?*

A I was Chairman of the Defence Committee I summoned the

Chiefs of Staff Having got the agreement of Nehru and of any other ministers who were present, I got them round instantly I told them V P Menon had come back with the instrument of accession He came back with a request for intervention I said we had to get there, because if we didn't I would be held responsible for the slaughter which will undoubtedly occur to the British retired colonels there and their wives But basically, we wanted to stop further massacres along the route, and in Srinagar

So I told them that I wanted them to go up there But without using the British RAF or British troops, entirely with Indian aeroplanes, civil or military, and Indian troops What I did was to put out a flash call for every single aeroplane of all local Indian airways to return to the most convenient place, to disembark their passengers and fly immediately to Delhi

I wanted the right sort of troops to go up there I knew there were one or two Gurkha battalions here so I said "Use them to begin with I personally think the others you can use are Sikhs. The Sikhs are not involved, as between the Muslim and Hindu populations (There was no Sikh population in Jammu) And send off the appropriate senior officers to Palam airfield The necessary equipment, decide what it is, the ammunition. Have a continuing supply going on If we fail to reach the airfield in Srinagar before the tribesmen (some of this may not have been recorded before) get down to the edge of the airfield We must have a parachute battalion ready to drop, and they'll be dropped at the most convenient point, where the tribesmen haven't yet got to—there are plenty up the vale of Srinagar, of the Jumna—to do that. They'll go down with their superior weapons, machine guns and mortars They must drive them off and reopen the airfield and get the troops in Off you go, full speed!" I made them run They all went off at high speed, and did that

Q. *Did you have any difficulty with Auchinleck concerning the sending in of troops?*

A I think he rang me up on the telephone, frightfully excited, which he would only do in an emergency He may have come round, because his house was only just down the road But I do remember that he said he'd had news of the tribesmen, that they were on mischief bent, and that unless they were delayed by their orgies of rape and massacre and so forth, they would be down so quickly that he thought troops ought to be sent off that very night, if he could

And I said, "No, I can't agree to that," and I explained

He said, "Well, you realise that if the Maharaja doesn't accede, and you can't get the troops up, you must have British troops in immediately "

I said, "No, even then I can't let you go "

"Why not?"

"I'll tell you why not To have British troops intervene, this requires, first of all, the approval of the Home Government This is a thing I can't give you, there'd be repercussions It also requires the approval of the Indians and Pakistanis—an agreement which I am not in a position to give you I'm not the Viceroy, I'm the Constitutional Governor-General I'm no longer in a position to give you that approval

"But I can tell you one thing as the former Viceroy, that if you do this move on your own, without British Government permission, you'll be in very, very grave difficulty with everybody And I can tell you one further thing," I added, "I am convinced that Hari Singh will sign at once and ask for help, because he's so terrified So I've already started collecting Indian aeroplanes here, and troops, and I do not think you could get on very much quicker than I could "

"Oh!" he said, "If you do it, I'd be much happier " He was in a real frenzy about the whole thing! "Look," he said, "you under-

stand Srinagar is the Chelmsford of India All the British officers retired from the Indian army are up there They'll have their throats slit by these tribesmen because they're British You'll have the massacre of several hundred British officers and their wives on your hands if you don't let me use the RAF to fly in a British brigade which I have standing by "

I said, "I can't let you do it, I'm sorry "

He probably could have done it quicker than me. But I couldn't let him Nor could I allow the RAF to fly Indian troops

"But," he said, "if you fail, you've got all these innocent lives on your hands "

I said, "My dear, that's the penalty of this job "

Q *Do you remember the particular feelings Nehru had about the Kashmir issue? Did they complicate things?*

A I do, indeed From the beginning, he confessed he was deeply involved in Kashmir. He was a Kashmiri Brahmin, it was his home But he was a man of the highest integrity and intellect He would not have dreamt of trying to coerce Kashmir into India on account of his emotional attachment But once they had, in fact, thrown in their lot with India, he said, "I cannot let them down " That was his explanation of it He was quite honest, he made no bones about it

Nehru never expunged from his mind the facts as he saw them. He didn't have such an emotional block that he couldn't see them, he could I urged him to have a plebiscite to decide which way Kashmir wanted to go He immediately agreed, with the proviso we mentioned earlier

It showed he was willing to put the thing to the test because the population was 80 per cent Muslim He also knew in those days that with Sheikh Abdullah out, they'd win The reason he wanted the raiders out, of course, was his certain knowledge that

while they were there they'd influence the plebiscite He was perfectly reasonable while praying and hoping Kashmir would remain in India

Q *What was Jinnah's reaction when he learned you were sending Indian troops into Kashmir?*

A He exploded with rage He called General Messervy* and told him, "This is going too far, we shall have to declare war We'll have to invade Kashmir and throw the Indians out "

Messervy said, "You realize this will mean a real war?"

"Yes "

"I must warn you that this will entail severe repercussions and I must report this to the Supreme Commander," Messervy said He then called Auchinleck who said, "You will not take Jinnah's orders to advance into Kashmir until he appreciates that the moment he invades, every British officer now serving in the Pakistan army must be stood down before the order is given "

Auchinleck reported this to me It stopped the war in its tracks Unlike the Indian army which had much more intelligent officers and could perhaps carry on, the Pakistan army couldn't carry on without British officers. So when he said they'd have to be stood down before the order was given that stopped them. Otherwise Jinnah would have given them the orders to go in

Q *You have been accused of having got too involved in the Kashmir operation What is your own feeling about it?*

A I have indeed been accused of getting too involved in doing this Alright, so I made a mistake But look, I'm not a chap who tried to protect himself I knew none of these people had any

* Lt Gen Sir F W Messervy, GOC-in-C, Northern Command, India, 1946-47

idea how to run a defence committee and I knew all about it It would be very cowardly to do it behind a screen Nehru hadn't a clue how to do it I also knew I could keep things straight It's true I stuck out my neck, but I did it with my eyes open and I think I limited their excesses Whatever they did wrong, they did it less wrong because I was there

When it was decided to send troops, I said, "You cannot do it until Kashmir is a part of India You can only do it, therefore, if he accedes If he doesn't I shall have to advise you, *you are not entitled to send troops in* Second, remember nothing whatever was prepared for this operation We believe the tribesmen were coming in trucks supplied by the Pakistan government, therefore they were involved, their army may be involved, and this was not an affair to be taken lightly It's touch and go if we can seize the airfield and hold, unless we start operations right now within the hour "

They decided they would and said, "How?"

I said, "Leave it to me " This is how I got the three chiefs and ordered every airplane mobilized in India, RIAF, commercial, private Bring them all to Delhi, no arguments Second, ready your troops, even the Delhi garrison, if you have to

Q *If the Radcliffe awards had not given Gurdaspur and two tahsils to India, would Kashmir have been justified in acceding to India?*

A I think not I always said in all the speeches I made about accession that there were certain geographical compulsions. I mean the idea that Junagadh could join with Pakistan, across all the other Kathiawar states was just stupid The idea that Hyderabad could join with Pakistan was equally stupid. Now there is just one question about Kashmir which didn't arise and it's a hypothetical one In the case of Kashmir where the juxtaposition was so close that we could fly in very easily, this might

have been an argument that was used I might have been more hesitant about saying it but should probably not have mentioned it to this man at all My own opinion is that if this had happened, we should have accepted, of course It's a terrible thing to say it, but it might have been a solution I mean Radcliffe let us in for an awful lot of trouble by making it possible for them to accede to India If he hadn't made that award, the Maharaja would really have had no option but to join Pakistan

This would have meant they wouldn't have had to put the tribes in There would have been no fears of massacre, and you wouldn't have had to send the troops in The pressures on the Maharaja would have built to where he had to accede to Pakistan I never discussed this with Radcliffe—it never occurred to me that he would be influenced by this question of Kashmir having to accede That double-crosser, Mudie* giving away Abell's note gave rise to the claim that I, as Viceroy, had brought improper pressure to bear on Radcliffe on behalf of my future dominion, as Governor-General designate of India, to open up this route to make it possible for them to join us

I am sure Radcliffe had no notion of the consequences.

Q *Around Christmas 1947, you seemed to be persuaded that a full-scale war between Pakistan and India was about to take place Why?*

A I was, indeed It looked to me as if a war was heating up between the two dominions, a proper war, which then was much more complicated than it would be now because of the British officers who were engaged I knew both countries required the British officers' stability to help their forces, and I thought it would be disastrous to have a war which might terminate their connection with them before they were ready for it That was one

*Sir Robert Francis Mudie, Governor of Sind, 1946-47

of the basic things that worried me so much. **I also knew that I had lost my influence with Jinnah because he didn't trust me, he just understood that he couldn't come to see me, nor I him.**

Q *Didn't you meet Jinnah to try to avoid this war?*

A Yes, at Lahore I remember the scene very distinctly I think what made it so painful was that he was telling me that I owed it to Pakistan—as I had perpetrated partition and created Pakistan —to stop the genocide of Pakistanis in the early days, by the Indians Therefore he could not absolve me of responsibility, although I was now the Constitutional Governor-General, as he knew He thought I had a residual responsibility to control the Indian leadership and was trying to take unfair advantage of me This was very painful

Q. *One of the big problems that the first independent Indian government faced was the constant controversy between Nehru and Patel How did you help solve this problem?*

A What happened was this I knew Patel wanted to resign, for the wrong reasons He felt he was a realist, a bit of a reactionary, but a realist, a nationalist, and Nehru was definitely a theoretical socialist. He was a Fabian, with fine ideas that he wasn't in a position to carry out And Patel felt he was wrecking things; was preventing business from going on. He was preventing stability. He thought this was nonsense and he couldn't get him to stop it

Gandhi told me about all this They've reached a split, he said Patel wanted to resign because he couldn't go on with Nehru What do you think? he asked

I said, "Well, Patel can't resign Nehru is the great ideological leader of the people, but he's a visionary, he's not very practical Patel is eminently practical He's, in fact, running the country, you can't let him go or the country would disintegrate

You can't let Nehru go, either, because then the ultimate image would disappear They're both needed and they've got to learn to work together "

"I agree," he said, "they must be together " He stopped Patel from resigning, but asked me to bring them together which I did, at the time of his death.

Q *How were you informed that Gandhi had been assassinated?*

A My wife and I had been in Madras and she'd stayed back to organise a hospital I had flown back to Delhi with Patricia and Pamela That afternoon of January, 30 1948, I went out for a ride with Patricia I was very fond of her and we always enjoyed riding together very much. We were alone We rode out from Viceroy's House, past the C-in-C's house where now you have all these embassies Then, it was a vast plain Nobody knew quite where we'd gone and nobody knew where to find us Luckily I rode in within a few moments of the news reaching the house I was met by these white-faced ADC's saying, "Gandhiji's been attacked He's seriously wounded " They didn't know he was dead

I ordered up my car right away I went up to my room and quickly changed My press secretary, Campbell-Johnson* was there and I said, "Jump in Alan, this is very, very serious If the old boy dies we're in real trouble " I said, "Straight to Birla House " They had the radio on in the car, and I have an idea the driver said, "It's just come on the radio He's dead!" I think the announcement was made just before I got into the car If we didn't hear it on the car radio, then someone came out and told us as we were getting into the car Anyway, about the time we started, I got the news

*Alan Campbell-Johnson, Press Attache, to Lord Mountbatten when he was Viceroy

Mind you, I'm always excited by action I've been in so many situations that you musn't give me too much credit for not losing my head on an occasion like this We arrived and there was a large crowd there Outside, we pushed our way through the crowd up to the door As we were about to go in, one of these typical Indian agitators stood up and shouted in a loud voice, "It was a Muslim that did it!"

I turned around and in a furious loud voice, I shouted back, "You fool! Don't you know it was a Hindu?" And that silenced him on the spot It was the most shattering reply he could have had. They wanted it to be a Muslim, they wanted to run a riot. The idea it might be a Hindu shattered them As we went in, Alan asked me, "How can you possibly know it's a Hindu?"

I said, "I don't But if it is a Muslim we're all finished, so it may as well be a Hindu"

Imagine a room, good sized, and the body of Gandhi lying on a little mat I was very moved It was a scene like in a cathedral with a sort of faintly holy atmosphere It was a very moving moment Subdued, low buzz of people whispering together And there were his sort of honorary grand-daughters, Abba and Manu, pretty girls, sitting around weeping their eyes out They were stroking his head, looking at him He'd only just died

I went up and looked at him His little steel spectacles had been taken off and I hardly recognized him I'd never seen him without them He had an astonishing look of repose The most peaceful face, as though he was quite happy

I was affected but not like the Indians I'm a reasonably stoic Anglo-Saxon and I neither wept nor gave any outward sign of emotion although I was very sad that the old boy had gone and I was deeply worried by what was going to happen next

And then I realized, suddenly, we were up against the old fatalism of Asia and nobody was going to do anything Nobody was doing anything I suddenly understood, it had come back once more to me But I was determined not to throw my weight

about So I went first to Nehru I said, "Jawaharlal I'm terribly sorry about this " And then Patel was standing by us and I beckoned to him and said, "Vallabhbhai, come here "

I said, "You both know how much I loved dear old Gandhiji " Then I said to them both "Just let me tell you something **Only three days ago when he saw me, he said how worried he was that you, his two greatest friends, his greatest supporters, the people he loved and admired most in the world, were drifting apart, drifting apart for ideological reasons, drifting apart in a way that was going to be disastrous for the country. You have to get together. You know what he said, also He said, 'They'll listen to you more than to me now. Do your best to bring them together'** " This, I said, was his dying wish "If he means all the things to you you're implying with your grief here, this is what he wanted, let me see you embrace " And they did They went and they hugged each other The most moving moment, you can't imagine And that broke the whole thing

I then said, "I take it that he's to be cremated "

"Yes, of course "

"I take it that your custom is that it must be done in 24 hours "

"Yes, of course "

"I take it you appreciate there'll be the biggest crowd There'll be more people in Delhi tomorrow than there are inhabitants in Delhi "

"Yes "

"You realize to get a funeral procession through a crowd like that is a major military operation? I'm going to get a funeral car prepared and the artillery who are used to drawing field-guns on foot will draw the funeral car My own bodyguard will be his immediate close escort The troops will line the route The bands will play The air force will line the burning ghats "

They both looked aghast

"Do you have any objections?" I asked "He wouldn't mind

being attended by the services He had no feeling about them being men of violence and he being the man of peace. He would recognize this "

They both agreed that this was to be his funeral And I thought this was going to be one of my difficulties I said, "Well, now then, let's do this thing right " I had one of my ADCs with me, Peter Howes "Get me Baldev Singh, the Minister of Defence " I said I said to him, the P M and the Deputy P M. have together decided that the services will be given the unique honour of conducing the funeral of Gandhiji Nehru and Patel both nodded They were in tears Baldev said "What do I do?"

I said, "Wait a moment and I'll tell you what to do Just wait here " I then sent for the three chiefs of staff, all Englishmen I turned to Nehru and said, "You must go to All India Radio and broadcast to the country "

"I can't I'm not prepared, I don't know what to say "

I said, "Look, it will come You go to All India Radio and you, Alan, you lay on the programme Tell them to clear the air and stand by for a broadcast from the P M "

Again, Nehru protested He said, ' I don't know what to say."

I said, "Look, when you get there, God will tell you what to say. It will be a great speech " And, of course, it was **I'm not trying to blow my own trumpet, but this was the difference between a British trained, political leader and an eastern fatalist.** If I'd been in Madras then and not come back to Delhi, I tremble to think of the inaction there would have been Nothing would have happened at all

I went back into Gandhiji's room, very quickly, voice down, very slowly I did it all as though I was in church I felt I was in a church service, really, and one was trying to arrange the choir movement That was the extraordinary feeling about it And that, I do know, had a most powerful effect Nobody around **I was once more back in charge of the country.**

There were two occasions when that happened Once during in

the riots in Peshawar in April, and then when I went into that room and nothing was happening It's the most extraordinary thing, that Indian weakness of not taking action

Don't forget the three C-in-C's were British, and I would like to point out to you that it was an unusual decision that was made. At the time, it was accepted by them all and I'm sure Gandhi himself would have approved

The next morning we went first to Birla House to see the old boy He looked so peaceful And we walked behind the procession at the beginning The masses that came out were unbelievable We went along as a sort of tribute Then we broke away and went back to Government House and went up to the dome and looked down You could see the procession passing and it was most extraordinary Not only was there a great crowd, but the crowd started to move with it You see, the King's Way was so wide there was room for 100,000 people to go with him, on either side, and that showed things up It took a very long while to get to the ghats

It was very moving and very tense The people were stunned There was a reverential silence and bowed heads The open military truck on which Gandhi was laid was drawn by soldiers of the three services We went down to the ghats with my wife by another road I found government ministers, princes, ambassadors and all the great of India already there, all standing in a group There were only 150 air force soldiers and I realized we'd made a mistake I'd thought the air force was stronger than that They clearly weren't going to be able to hold anybody back I then said in a loud voice, "Do you mind, all of you standing back a bit?" And I just pushed them back and got my ADCs to push them back When I got them away by about 20 yds from the funeral pyre, I said, "Now will you please all just quietly sit down " I started with my family We sat down and I made them sit Row upon row We got them down until we had about 40 rows sitting I didn't tell them why, they all thought it was out

of respect for Gandhi And I was criticized in the British press for showing too much respect for the old bird But, of course, it was for an entirely different reason I knew what was going to happen There was a space to draw the lorry right up to the ghat From there, it wasn't a long distance to carry the body It was carried and placed reverently on the pyre. They had a lot of trouble arranging it all before burning it You know, folding the arms, getting it all settled down

And then, one of Gandhiji's sons climbed up on the pyre, and took a torch Now, of course, a funeral pyre is very scientifically done, very carefully arranged with plywood and thoroughly drenched in paraffin, and the flames roared up When the flames went up the cries, "Gandhi is immortal" went up too and at that moment, the crowd rushed forward God knows what happened to the rear two ranks People fell all over them **But the multitude was physically stopped by this vast number of VIPs sitting cross-legged on the ground If we hadn't been sitting, we would all have been pushed into the flames!**

That was the moment when Gandhi became eternal Extraordinary scene To see somebody you know being burnt, I had never witnessed this before In front of your eyes It's the most astonishing thing

Q. *After Gandhi's assassination were you afraid the same thing could happen to Nehru, or Patel, yourself?*

A I never thought of myself You can't go around thinking about yourself, that would be idiotic And it wouldn't have mattered if I'd been assassinated, it would have mattered if Nehru had gone, or Patel I was concerned—look, they'd murdered Liaquat, and if Jinnah lived long enough he'd have been assassinated, too I tried to get Nehru and Patel to accept protection and I gave them orders "I'm going to have you protected, whether you want it or not"

Mind you, we had a certain amount of protection during the riots, but now I thought they were absolute targets If this was a plot, instead of just one chap you see, I had to do a lot of thinking about these things

Q *Can you list some of the details of the protection you ordered?*

A No I gave no details The way I would deal with these things, I'd say, "Listen, we have the problem that some of the other leaders may be targets, and in particular Nehru and Patel And I want you to make quite certain that the greatest possible protection is laid on"—in whatever way they felt I didn't give any details

Q *After the bomb at Gandhi's prayer-meeting did the young Hindu extremist who was arrested speak of a further plot?*

A No, he did not, but I do know Gandhi was very anxious we should do nothing about it Typically sweet of him He was so vague He really made it easy for himself to be assassinated He kept on saying, "I may live to be 100 "

Q *There were, however, rumours of a plot to assassinate Gandhi. Did they come mainly from Muslim sources?*

A No I felt that the people most likely to kill him would be the extremist Hindus, since they were most against him Because he was, in fact, protecting the Muslims The Muslims would be the last people in their senses to kill him, and they were terrified when he was killed He was their great protector

Q *Nehru and Patel asked you to sack Auchinleck because they felt he was too pro-Pakistani How did you solve this problem?*

A. The background of Auchinleck's leaving was that I couldn't get Patel to believe in his integrity. You see, both sides thought if you did anything honourable and upright which benefitted the other side, it was against them In the case of Auchinleck, they said that they thought he was building up the Pakistan army in cahoots with the Pakistanis, to India's detriment But he wasn't. Pakistan thought he wasn't doing enough so they were angry with him, but they didn't want him to go, and Jinnah objected very much to his being pushed out

Well, I stopped him from being pushed out, they wanted me to sack him They couldn't sack him, they could only withhold facilities I chose a date and I said I will not say, "Out " I'll negotiate with him to leave a month early or something, in which case it would seem normal But if you think I'm just going to tell him to get out, forget it, I'm not

It was very painful for Auchinleck to have to stay on in those circumstances He then seemed to indicate that he wanted to go at once I said, "No, that you can't do! I'm doing as well by you as I can because you will leave without the world knowing that the Indians are fed up with you They have no reason to be, and I don't want the world to think that this was so!"

Nehru was the man who really agreed to this Patel, rather reluctantly V P Menon kept trying to explain to Patel that Auchinleck's integrity was complete, that it was no use A rather sad stay When I saw him, Auchinleck was very bitter, but not with me He said, he was always very correct, "Your Excellency, you couldn't have behaved better towards me personally, all the way through And I'm sorry your government's taken this line "

Q *During the 15 months that you and your wife stayed in India, you exceeded by more than £30,000 your income and allowances in order to keep Viceroy's House, and later Government House, going in the grand style you enjoyed How did you do it?*

A. This is a marvellous story Yes indeed, my wife and I spent £ 30,000 beyond our allowances and income [illegible] more than 25,000 guests at parties, 1,300 at dinners, 1,200 at lunches, and so on Let's say that we can't have spent less than one pound on any guest that came to parties, and for lunch and dinner parties, it was five or six pounds at least We offered to pay this amount out of our own pocket But the curious thing is that we didn't have the money to pay it back because my own income, which was ample before the war, was now so surtaxed that all I was receiving was only about 6 pence in a pound My wife's fortune was, of course, very large But her money was in trust, and she couldn't touch it The reason was because there was a thing from memory called the Married Women's Property Act, which prevented husbands from attempting to sequestrate the wife's capital

So we took advice from Stafford Cripps himself, who was the Chancellor, and he said, "It's nice of you to offer to pay I think you really, should pay, because you've exceeded your salary and allowances by a great deal of money without consulting me " We both agreed It was going to be our personal financial contribution to the task we had sought to achieve we thus put up a Private Member Bill to Parliament in order to have my wife's money released But the Conservative Party, wishing to punish us viciously for what we had done in India, prevented the Bill from going through They were, of course, being bloody silly, because then the Government would have to pay for the money spent by us in India

One day we had Stafford Cripps and his wife for lunch and I remember shocking the poor man terribly "Stafford, we've found a way to get our money legally We've got to be divorced, the moment we're divorced, Edwina can break her Trust Then we can be remarried the day after the Trust has been broken "

He was a very rigid man He said, "This would be absolute blasphemy You can't do that!"

So I said, "Well, will you tell me any other way we can release this money legally "

He said, "Now that you've put me on the spot, the only way is for the Government to sponsor the Bill "

So the Government sponsored a special Bill, so that we could get our money and reimburse our debts But I insisted it should be worded in special phraseology which would enable every other married woman to break her Trust, and we had lots of letters saying, thank God, you've at last got us out of a difficulty.

Q *The day you left Delhi in June 1948, more than 300,000 Indians turned out to ask you to stay on How do you explain the extraordinary popularity you and your wife enjoyed in India?*

A I have no single good explanation What is it that suddenly made the people of India go overboard for us? It happened very quickly, within two or three weeks of our arrival Wherever we went—north, south, east, west, throughout an entire continent —what happened that we had this amazing, unbelievable reception wherever we went? What happened when we went to see the last British troops leave Bombay with a million people turning out to give us a reception, and what happened in 1963, fifteen years later, when without and previous arrangement, the same number of people turned out again, many of whom hadn't been born at the time of independence? That is something

And it is something I can't understand I'll try and give you a few facts, but they're not sufficient I had commanded probably a million Indians in Burma (I had 1,300,000 soldiers altogether) and they'd seen me and known me I had this very bogus facility for languages I had these phrase-books. Every battalion I went to, I spoke a bit of their own language I had a speech lasting two minutes which I could deliver in Urdu to the Indians, and another to Gurkhas I had phrase-books for Chinyanja, Swahili, Hansa, for Mandarin Chinese (not much good, just for

the officers), Sinhalese, a bit of Burmese, I had all these phrases And they actually thought I spoke their language! Well, I didn't but they had this feeling, that here is a chap who understands us

Now this lasted two and a half years, and they'd come back to every village, every place, so they said, this is the Great White Sahib who really understands, and is our friend

That's one thing But if a million men come back to four hundred million people—what's that? one-fourth of one per cent That's not enough! I think the Indians knew we were so devoted to them Don't forget, they knew we had this lovely sort of feeling about India, that had its effect

Q. *Did the fact that you represented the Crown help your popularity?*

A It was very important Much more important in retrospect than I thought when I went out I didn't realize it when I went out, but I think they had their own attachments to the Crown, and although the Crown was a symbol of oppression to the Fabian socialists who were trying to get independence it was also the symbol to which everyone else looked up I had felt this very intensely when I went out first in 1921 with the Prince of Wales I'll tell you something quite extraordinary When we went up to Jammu and Kashmir, I can remember very well, there was a State Ball We all dressed up and after the Ball the state elephants, in full regalia, were paraded outside, and I said, let's each take one of our partners up So the Prince went with one girl, and I went with another on another elephant And as we started to move off, the Indian sub-inspector of police jumped up and down waving his arms, and said, "Sir, stop them," calling to the Resident, Sir Arthur Loder

The Prince of Wales turned round and said, "Loder, what does that bloody fool want?" in a loud voice So Loder asked him, and the fellow then explained that there were special high-

tension power cables running round the camp, and we'd hit them! So he made us turn round and go back The next day, the Indian sub-inspector of police came to see Loder, and said, "I think that H R H wished to refer to me personally in his discussion with you last night "

"Yes," said Loder, "he did "

"Would you mind recalling to mind what he said?"

"Yes, of course, I can remember exactly what he said "

"Because every remark by the Prince of Wales is an honour to my family, and I want to put it down in my family records " So he wrote, "I am happy to record the remarks which H R H designed to pass on this occasion He said, 'What the hell does the bloody fool want?' "

This gives you some idea of what the Indians were like If the Prince of Wales referred to him as a bloody fool, this was an honour beyond his wildest dreams Unless you understand that, you won't understand what it is the Indians felt about the Crown. One of the most extraordinary examples of India's special attachment of the Crown was given to me by someone who had attended the Durbar of 1912 When George V, the King Emperor, stepped off his great golden throne and walked about a 100 yds to his carriage along a freshly-gravelled road, women came and touched their fingers in the King-Emperor's footprints and anointed their foreheads This gives you some idea of what they felt about him and about what he incarnated

When we came back to London we went to a sort of "Thank you" dinner at 10 Downing Street at which, from memory, Anthony Eden represented the Conservative Party He was very friendly Then a dinner at Buckingham Palace, it was the first time I met Winston Churchill after our return from India Having known Winston since before World War I he'd been a great friend of my wife and I—I immediately went up to him and as I approached him, a lot of people rushed up and he raised his hand and said,

"Dickie, stop. What you did in India is as though you'd struck me across the face with a riding whip." He turned his back on me and didn't speak to me for five years, until he appointed me First Sea Lord.

Part II

REPORTS

A selection of personal and official documents from Lord Louis Mountbatten's stay as Governor-General of independent India, August 16, 1947-June 18, 1948

SECTION I: THE AFTERMATH OF PARTITION

A. PROBLEMS OF TRANSITION

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, on September 8, 1947

I received a message at 4 o'clock asking if the Prime Minister could come and see me at 4.30, or as soon after as I was free.

He came in looking sad and tired and sank exhaustedly into an armchair. He talked for an hour unburdening his soul: worried about the incidents on the N.W. Frontier, where Indian and Pakistan troops were said to be firing at each other; worrying about what would happen to the 45,000 Muslims in India if Pakistan became an all-Muslim state and India, in consequence, became an all-Indian/Sikh state.

The interesting thing is that the Prime Minister really came simply and solely for company; to unburden his soul; and to obtain what comfort I had to give him. He has lately written me two or three letters beginning: "I don't know why I am writing this letter except that I feel I must write to someone to get my troubles off my chest."

I pointed out to him that no Government in history had been faced with such a formidable task within a week of its birth, and that if we could grip this situation, then the prestige of the Indian

and Pakistan Governments would go up in the eyes of the world; but that if we failed then the Governments were finished I assured him we should not fail, and pointed out how within 48 hours the whole of the Central Government machinery had taken a new lease of life and that decisions which might normally take a fortnight were now being implemented on the same day that orders were issued

He agreed that there was a great spirit of zeal and optimism among everybody in the Emergency Committee, but was afraid that they would sag afterwards when the duller but equally vital job of rehabilitation and combatting the economic crisis came up

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with Field Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck, Supreme Commander, on August 21, 1947

I saw the Supreme Commander for a few minutes before the meeting to the Joint Defence Council summoned at the request of the Prime Minister late last night

The message which the Supreme Commander had received by telephone was to the effect that in spite of the conference which had been held and the action which had been taken, the situation was still out of hand in the Punjab and that the Boundary Force was proved ineffective, further that the Prime Minister and the Defence Minister wished to propose that General Rees* should be given additional Indian officers, and that responsibility for the Boundary Force should be divided, one half to be under an Indian Officer for East Punjab, and the other half under a Pakistan Officer for West Punjab, but that they would remain under the overall operational command of General Rees

The Supreme Commander was extremely angry, he complained

*Maj-Gen T W Rees, Head of Military Emergency Staff

bitterly at the suggestion that the P.B F. (Punjab Boundary Force) was being ineffective, on the contrary he maintained that if we had not set up a P.B F under a joint command with mixed units, and under the control of the Joint Defence Council, the situation which, although bad, was now in hand would have been completely out of hand with large-scale massacre, leading eventually to civil war, inevitably He therefore took the gravest exception to the imputation that the P B F was ineffective, secondly, he could not possibly agree to India and Pakistan officers taking operational command which would mean that Sardar Baldev Singh would be able to give direct orders to the India section of the Force which he would no doubt utilise in favour of the Sikh community

He went on to say that his own position was quite clear Either the P B F system of command remained exactly as it was, or it was completely split in which case General Rees must be removed and the two Governments must take the sole individual responsibility for the consequences

I told him that my view was that the system of command should remain as it was, but that it would be necessary to find some small gesture to save the Prime Minister's face, since he had called this meeting The Supreme Commander was most emphatic that he would sooner resign than give way for, he said, "if we give way at all the situation will get worse I have been handling this sort of crisis for the last four years and always they try and get more and more control into their own hands for purely communal purposes "

I told him that I could not contemplate his resigning at this stage, for what was the good of all the sacrifices that everybody had made (including my own in staying on) if within a week of achieving the successful transfer of power in a blaze of good feeling towards the British, the Supreme Commander were to resign and upset the whole of Indo-British relations—since undoubtedly many senior British officers would follow his example

He then told me that he placed himself entirely in my hands; but that in my own interests he relied on my not giving way over the P B F

I told him that I had decided not to give way in principle, but so to handle the meeting that the Prime Minister and the Defence Minister would be let down easily and accept the situation gracefully

At the meeting it proved possible by careful handling to create an atmosphere in which it was practically impossible for either the Prime Minister or the Defence Minister even to put forward the proposals which had been made over the telephone, let alone press them

The Supreme Commander stopped back after the Joint Defence Council meeting to remark to me that he considered the result of the meeting little short of miraculous "I don't know how you do it " I replied, "It is easy to handle a meeting when one knows one is going to be backed up It was your agreeing to let me handle the show the way I wanted that made it possible to bring this result about "

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with the Defence Minister (Sardar Baldev Singh) on August 26, 1947

1 Sardar Baldev Singh referred to the meeting of the Cabinet which took place just before the Joint Defence Council meeting held on August 21, at which he said the matter of the future command of the Boundary Force was discussed It had been intended to raise this matter at the Joint Defence Council but he said that on hearing what I had to say, he had not pressed the matter (Extracts from the Minutes of this Cabinet meeting are attached)

2 Now however that General Rees at the Joint Defence

Council held on August 25, had reported that the discipline, morale and reliability of units of the Punjab Boundary Force could not be relied on for more than another two or three weeks, the Defence Minister felt that something must be done, if possible, to prevent this situation arising, and secondly to compete with it if it did arise I entirely agreed that this was most desirable He then went on to say that he and Mr Chundrigar (the Pakistan Minister who had been at the Joint Defence Council on August 25) had had a further discussion on this matter, and both were in complete agreement that something must be done I asked the Defence Minister what was on his mind, and to come out with it It then transpired that he and Mr Chundrigar both thought that the two Dominion Governments should take over the responsibility for their respective areas on each side of the boundary line, and should take over the formations which were located on each side of the boundary line at present I told him that this would take a great responsibility both off my shoulders and those of Field Marshal Auchinleck The Defence Minister expressed gratification that I took this view, and I went on to say "And provided the Joint Defence Council at an official meeting will relieve Field Marshal Auchinleck and myself, and incidentally General Rees, of all future responsibility for the Punjab, we shall be delighted, provided always that it is clearly regarded that in doing so the representatives of the two Governments take the full responsibility for the mutinies which may occur among the Sikhs and Hindus in the regiments transferred to Pakistan, and among the Muslims in the regiments transferred to India, and provided also that they will take the responsibility for the breakdown of communications which now are provided only by the Boundary Force between East and West Punjab, and finally provided that they will take the full responsibility for the added lives lost if this system, so far from providing a solution, merely aggravates the condition

3 The Defence Minister was distressed that I took such a

gloomy view of what might happen, and agreed that Field Marshal Auchinleck and I would have to be given this assurance officially, and possibly even publicly

4 I then called upon him to be quite frank and tell me what was on his mind "Do you wish to be able to issue orders to the soldiers in East Punjab direct through General Lockhart* instead of through the Joint Defence Council, Field Marshal Auchinleck and General Rees?" He hotly denied this, and said that personally he would prefer the present system to continue if he could be convinced that it could cope with the troubles which General Rees forecast and if it could be made to satisfy the growing public dissatisfaction at the massacres going on unchecked He hastened to add that he was not one of those who blamed the Boundary Force for the continuing massacres, and thought that they had done a magnificent job, but said that this was not the view held by the public at large

5 I asked him whether he had consulted General Lockhart, and he told me he had not liked to do so till he got my views, as he did not wish to put up anything at the Joint Defence Council of which I would disapprove

6 I then told him that I considered he should call a meeting of his Chiefs of Staff Committee, that is General Lockhart, Air Marshal Elmhirst and Rear Admiral Hall and warn them that he was thinking of discussing the advisability of the India Command becoming responsible for operations up to the East Punjab border He undertook to consult them and let me know the result.

7 I asked him to raise the whole question at the next Joint Defence Council on Thursday, but he seemed very bashful about doing this and said, "I do not wish to raise any matter which will in any way embarrass Your Excellency " I told him that this would in no way embarrass me, the only embarrassment would

*Gen Sir Rob Lockhart, C-in-C of the Indian army.

be if I felt he was not airing his views on my account. I therefore told him that if he failed to raise it at the next Joint Defence Council, I would certainly do so, as this was a matter which had to be thrashed out formally in Council.

8. I then told him that unless the leaders, particularly the Sikh leaders, could get a political grasp of the situation, and stop these organised massacres, riots and arson, that no reorganisation of the Punjab Boundary Force or any other steps that were taken of a military nature, could possibly compete with the situation or prevent a breakdown of armed morale.

9. He entirely agreed and assured me that Master Tara Singh, Giani Kartar Singh and Uttam Singh have gone round to his knowledge preaching a calling off of the troubles. He pointed out however that goonda elements would always continue to try and take advantage of the disturbed conditions, and that he feared the Muslims would not call off the troubles in the West Punjab, since they stood to gain so much by the looting the rich Hindus and Sikhs there, a situation which did not obtain in the East Punjab. As evidence of this he quoted the case of Amritsar City which remained quiet while looting had now started in Lahore.

I finally reminded the Defence Minister that they now had responsible self-government, and that if the two Governments wished to do anything, however stupid or foolish impartial members of the Joint Defence Council might think it, they were fully entitled to do so, but only on condition that they formally took over the responsibility for this action, and the views of dissenting members were duly recorded.

ADDENDUM TO RECORD OF GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S INTERVIEW WITH THE DEFENCE MINISTER (SARDAR BALDEV SINGH) ON AUGUST 26, 1947

Extract from Minutes of Cabinet Meeting held on August 21, 1947

•••

(4) The manner in which the Boundary Forces had been functioning was not altogether satisfactory Certain difficulties had arisen principally because the present command of this force did not inspire confidence in the people It seemed that if proper control was to be established over Hindus and Sikhs in the East Punjab and over Muslims in the West, that could best be secured by placing the Boundary Forces in these areas in charge of commanders of the respective communities It had accordingly been proposed that senior Indian officers, Hindu and Muslim, should be placed in command of the forces in their respective areas, and should receive instructions from the Provincial Governments through General Rees What they now proposed was that while the force would retain its 'international' character it would at the same time be under a sort of 'national' control The suggestion, however, was likely to be objected to by the Supreme Commander The suggestion would be examined in the Joint Defence Council which was meeting later in the day

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with Pandit Nehru on August 27, 1947

1. The Prime Minister said that he would come to Princess

Elizabeth's wedding in November if he felt able to do so at the time He appeared doubtful of the psychological effect that his presence at the wedding would have on the people of India. I pointed out that it would be a golden opportunity for him to meet Prime Ministers of the other Dominions, and particularly Field Marshal Smuts with whom he would be able to discuss the Indian problem in South Africa He gave his consent to my attending the wedding in an official capacity

2 We next discussed the future of the Punjab Boundary Force, and Nehru was throughout very balanced and reasonable. I told him that militarily speaking I considered that the force was essential and had justified itself He did not dispute this and had no arguments to offer on the military side It was only from the psychological aspect that he wanted a change He pointed out that the Punjab Boundary Force was being blamed for killings which had taken place, and that it could not be proved to the people that these killings would have been less if there had been no such Force. He wanted it to be proved to the people that the Dominion Governments had a closer control over the situation He asked that some compromise should be made militarily but left it in my hands as to what exactly this should be I suggested that a quicker retrocession of districts was probably the best answer.

3 Nehru was surprised that the situation in the Punjab as a whole had not improved at the rate it had been hoped for He was convinced that every leader was doing his best to stop the present disturbances He was coming to the conclusion that it would now be best for minorities to leave both the new Punjab provinces He quoted further cases of the Government of West Punjab refusing to release Hindus and Sikhs

4 I drew his attention to the articles and cartoons which had appeared in the Press that day attacking British officers I asked him whether it was his desire that the Press should be allowed to make such attacks and pointed out that by convention attacks

on officers who were unable to reply were not made in other countries He saw the danger and fully agreed with what I had said I pointed out that it was a question of educating the Press to their responsibilities He gave me permission to quote his views in my interview with the two Editors concerned that afternoon

5 I told Nehru the full story of the negotiations with Hyderabad and obtained his complete sympathy He fully understood that all my promises to help had been based on Sir Walter Monckton* staying I emphasised to him and he concurred that he should be no party to understand methods against Hyderabad, but I gave my opinion that it would not be unsuitable for the Government of India to support a demand for a referendum in that State

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with Mr Gadgil, Minister for Works, Mines and Power, on August 28, 1947

1 Mr Gadgil began by saying that he thought I might be interested to know that he had received hundreds of letters of protest at Congress' nominating a Britisher to be the first Constitutional Governor-General of India, but that since 15th August he had received an almost equal number congratulating Congress on making this very decision He remarked "I am keeping the two sets of letters together in one file, for they more than cancel each other out "

2 He then went on to say that he had read a copy of my letter to the Prime Minister about the need to grasp the economic reconstruction of the country, and agreed with every word I had written.

*Eminent jurist who served as the Constitutional Advisor to the Nizam of Hyderabad

3 I then discussed with him the future of the Punjab Boundary Force, and asked him what the Cabinet view was, since I knew that it had been discussed in Cabinet I pointed out that militarily speaking it was impossible to improve on the Punjab Boundary Force and that in splitting the force in order to give the two Dominion Governments military as well as political control over their respective areas, the result would be less efficient from the military point of view. However, the political, and above all the psychological and emotional aspects had to be considered, and I was now about to recommend to the Joint Defence Council that such a split should take place He entirely endorsed this decision, and said that however disadvantageous, he was sure that political matters must now take precedence

Note of a Meeting with the Prime Minister, Major-General Thimayya and Mr Gandhi, on September 25, 1947

I asked General Thimayya* to speak quite frankly and fearlessly on the situation and not to consider my feelings since all I wanted was the truth I asked him for a categorical answer to the question "Do you consider that the British officers of the Punjab Boundary Force discharged their duties faithfully and correctly and impartially?"

General Thimayya replied in a firm tone "I have no difficulty whatever in answering that question, in my opinion the answer is yes Of course in any particular group an exception may be found, but that is not peculiar to the British, but in the main I have no doubt whatever that they did their very best in the Punjab Boundary Force, as they are doing to this day

"In the Punjab Boundary Force they suffered from the disadvantage that they were not directly responsible to any government, the Force, large as it was, was inadequate to deal with the

*Major-General Thimayya, Commanding the 4th Indian Division

magnitude of the outbreak, and it is doubtful whether a force large enough to deal with such a mass rising could have been produced to suppress it I myself was a liaison officer, travelling round East and West Punjab, and I have no doubt that no force could have stopped the rising

"Furthermore, my two British Brigade Commanders, and my own HQ staff, which is at least 50 per cent British, are working themselves to death and loyally fulfilling their duties, we all owe them a great debt "

I asked General Thimayya whether he felt it would be possible for British officers to remain unless the Government of India took immediate and firm steps to reaffirm their faith in them and to denounce this statement of Pandit Kunzru's

General Thimayya replied, "British officers are already sending in their three months notices in increasing numbers At first I thought it might be directed against me as they might not like serving under an Indian G O C , but they have gone out of their way to tell me that this is not the case, that they like serving under me, and that it is merely the feeling of frustration at the situation in which they find themselves and the fact that they are obviously under constant criticism that is making many of them want to go

"The serious part is that the shortage of officers is so great today in the Indian army that we cannot afford to lose one more British officer until, at the very earliest, next April Any further reduction of officers will make the army an even weaker instrument than it is now "

I asked the Prime Minister if he would be prepared for the Government to make an immediate statement along the lines suggested He replied, "Certainly "

I then asked General Thimayya whether he thought that this suspicion of the British officers was confined to one side He replied, "Although it is true that many British officers are regarded as having pro-Muslim sentiments, I can assure you that

the Muslims as a whole are equally convinced that the British officers are pro-Hindu/Sikh I am afraid that is the reward of impartiality For example, Lieut-Colonel Mitchison, who was G.I to my predecessor, was reported to me as being so violently pro-Muslim that I should immediately get rid of him But I was not prepared to go on stories, and waited to form my own opinion. I was astounded to find that a certain Muslim officer attached to HQ came to me quite early on to say that he was not prepared to continue to serve under an officer like Mitchison who took pains to disguise his violent anti-Muslim feelings I then realised that Mitchison was probably completely impartial, and this has been amply borne out He has worked himself practically to a standstill most nights, and if he goes now it will be merely to avoid his breaking down from over-strain"

I interposed that General Lockhart had pointed out to me that British officers had the quality of completely [illegible] to the point of view of the part of the country in which they served and from which their Regiment was recruited. The fact that so large a part of the army is on the Frontier and the Punjab inevitably meant that many of them had pro-Muslim sentiments. But surely this was quite right so long as they were associated with the Muslims It would be found that officers serving in Gurkha or Madras regiments, in units from Bombay or any part of purely Hindu India, were as strongly pro-Hindu

The Prime Minister interjected that he absolutely saw this point of view and agreed with it

We then moved to my wife's study next door, where she had been looking after Mr Gandhi, who arrived to see me at noon; and the meeting was continued in their presence

I invited General Thimayya to repeat what he had already said. This he did, adding that Pandit Kunzru was a personal friend who had served with him on the Indian Nationalisation Committee, and who had been selected for this Committee because of his knowledge of an affection for the Indian army While on the

Committee, General Thimayya thought that Pandit Kunzru had been too conservative and, in his admiration for the British, had come into conflict with the rest of the members because of his desire to slow down the process of nationalisation He presumed that Pandit Kunzru had absorbed these latest ideas from talking to junior Indian officers who, not being correctly in the picture, were apt to try and find a scapegoat for their troubles in the English

General Thimayya went on to point out how very dangerous this situation was, for, he said, the propaganda now being directed against the British officers was beginning to have due effect among the rioters, and that British officers were now their special target No less than three British officers had been killed within the last two or three days and he was sure that this was the explanation

The real danger, he pointed out, was to the future of India. The rioters who now addressed their attention to the British officers did so because they believed it was the presence of the British officers more than any other factor which held the Indian regiments together and ensured their discipline was good enough to the point of opening fire on their own community, in carrying out their Government's order to protect the minority refugees. The rebels felt, therefore, that if they could remove the British officers the Indian regiments would no longer prove an obstacle to their attacks on refugees

But General Thimayya pointed out, he himself was determined to maintain the integrity and discipline of the Indian army, and all the Indian officers he had spoken to were equally determined; they would be bound to continue to carry out their Government's policy loyally And, once the rebels found that the Indian officers were as bad from their point of view as the British, their next traget would be Indian officers When this happened, it would be the end of the army, and once the army disintegrated what hope was there for India at this time of tremendous turmoil?

I pointed to a further danger I said that General Thimayya was worried about the effect of making British officers the traget, but I was worried that this might spread to British nationals as a whole including civilians, and women and children Once this happened, Americans would also be involved since there are nearly 100 Americans in Delhi who would be indistinguishable from Britons to the ordinary Indian

Once anything approaching a messacre of white people occurred, relations between the Dominion of India and the rest of the British Commonwealth and the United States would be irretrievably broken, and India's position in the world compromised for generations to come

I pointed out that unless some very aggressive steps were taken to counteract this danger, it would be valueless trying to keep any British in the Dominion of India, so that the Government would have to arrange for the immediate evacuation of all the British; nor could I see what further good I could do here in those circumstances

Mr Gandhi broke in with a wise observation He pointed out that the mere refutation of Pandit Kunzru's remarks, particularly by Nehru (who was now suspect for not being sufficiently communal on the Hindu/Sikh side) or by himself (whose remarks were becoming more and more obnoxious to the people of India), would not effect the main purpose we had in mind of checking the spread of this anti-British feeling among Indians

He therefore considered it of overriding importance that Pandit Kunzru should be immediately recalled to Delhi, should be confronted with his statement, should be asked to substantiate it, and, on failing to do so, should be called upon to make an unqualified apology and unhesitating withdrawal This would have a really profound effect as in the Gokhale case of 1896

Mr Gandhi suggested that General Thimayya should either see Pandit Kunzru, in view of their friendship and the unique position he was in to convince him of the truth, or at the very least

should leave a full personal letter behind for him to read.

Pandit Nehru here pointed out a complication, in that Pandit Kunzru was really attacking the whole of the present Government and not merely the British, and that it might be difficult to separate the two I, however, urged that the British case was the more pressing and that it should be grappled with strength at this moment

●●●

Mr Gandhi told me that the time had come when I must consider what action I should take to help in the present position if I did not wish to bury my own reputation and even the reputation of the British here in India where at present it stood so high

So far as I could make out his idea was that I should telegraph to Mr Attlee in my personal capacity as an Englishman and say that the British Commonwealth should not hesitate to expel any member of that Commonwealth which could be proved guilty of sharp practice and which intended to make war on another member

He was not saying this against Pakistan, for the rest of the Commonwealth might come to the conclusion that it was India, though he himself felt certain that they would not

He did not see how the rest of the Commonwealth could support two members in their midst who were drifting towards a stage that sooner or later might mean war

For instance, he considered that it was most unfortunate that Sir Francis Mudie, Sir George Cunningham and Sir Frederick Bourne should be Governors of Pakistan provinces at this time.

I asked him whether he believed Nishtar, Ghazanfar Ali and Chundrigar would prove a greater deterrent to war if they had been Governors

To my surprise Mr Gandhi replied that he would prefer to see them as Governors now, for then the full duplicity and hostile intent of Pakistan would stand revealed in all its nakedness.

whereas now they were covering up their intentions behind a facade of honourable British Governors

I said I assumed that Mr Gandhi quite understood that in the event of a war between the dominions, British officers would be withdrawn from both dominions immediately, since they could hardly be expected to fight each other I further pointed out that this sanction acted 90 per cent against Pakistan, for it was they who were short of senior officers and administrators and it was they who would be crippled by the removal of the British; whereas in India, though in my opinion they would lose great efficiency, they would not be crippled in the same way Mr Gandhi agreed

I told Mr Gandhi I could not possibly communicate with Mr Attlee behind Pandit Nehru's back and I would require to show him what I proposed to send and would need his full approval.

"Ah," said Mr Gandhi, "I am afraid you may have difficulty there, for though I agree you must do that, he has already refused to accept my suggestion of including this proposal in his reply to the Prime Minister on the question of the Pakistan telegrams to the Commonwealth "

I now felt we were in such deep water, and the point was so very unclear, and as the time was now past 2 p m , that it was better to let him go and ask him to put up his proposals in writing to me, which he promised to do

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Mr V P Menon, on October 2, 1947*

We discussed the Supreme Headquarters which Sardar Patel reminded me he had been urging me to abolish ever since the

*Secretary of the States Department, Government of India

trouble started I reminded him that these HQ did not belong to the Government of India although set up in Delhi, but were the joint responsibility of the Governments of India, Pakistan and UK, since they were concerned not only with the partition of the assets of India but also with the administration and looking after of the British officers

I reminded Sardar Patel that all officers in the Indian army and navy (there were none in the air force) were tansferred to their corresponding service for loan back to the two Dominions jointly They were thus posted by Supreme HQ which really was a Joint Headquarters, to serve either at Supreme HQ itself, or with the armed forces of the Dominion to which they were posted, or in charge of one of the joint establishments now about to be split I pointed out that such an organisation could not immediately be closed down The original idea had been that they should continue for about a year, that is until mid-August 1948 when the year's original terms of service of British officers would expire A little later on, not long before the transfer of power, the decision was taken to close the Supreme HQ in April as this was the period when the special powers of the Governor-General were going to expire and the interim period might be regarded as ended It was also the period when I myself would be leaving India

In the meanwhile, on Sardar Patel's urgent representation and in view of the general feeling which I understood existed in the Indian Cabinet, I brought pressure to bear on Field Marshal Auchinleck and he agreed that Supreme HQ could close down still earlier, probably February

With the increasing tension of feeling in the Indian Government, I had brought still greater pressure to bear on Field Marshal Auchinleck who was now prepared to close down the Supreme HQ on the 31st December, subject to three months notice being given to all British Service officers on the 1st October to terminate their existing contracts and enter into new contracts

with those Dominions that wanted them

Sardar Patel, whilst expressing some satisfaction at this speeding up, said that he still thought it too slow and that it was unbearable to think of an organisation like Supreme HQ sitting in Delhi throttling the initiative of India Command HQ and acting as the advance outpost of Pakistan

I protested at this and said I was certain that Supreme HQ were acting fairly and impartially, and that Field Marshal Auchinleck's integrity was beyond doubt or dispute

Sardar Patel replied, "They may think they are acting impartially, but as they are all mentally completely pro Pakistan, they are in fact out to help Pakistan at every turn "

He gave as an example the fact that the supreme Commander had insisted on keeping Pakistan employees at the Ordinance depots so that they had been able to arrange for illicit transfer of arms in large quantities to the Muslim League

When Lord Ismay* explained that no single case had yet been proven, and that the Prime Minister's request that Ferozepur Depot should be examined had proved that the charge was unfounded, Sardar Patel replied that that was because the British officers had connived at these irregularities and covered them up in the books

He went on to say, "The longer you leave Field Marshal Auchinleck and his Headquarters here the more seriously will the friendship between the British and India be impaired "

He went on to deplore the present state of the army He said it was a British instrument, designed to be commanded by British officers and to implement British policy For this purpose it was without parallel Nobody could deny that we had ruled India extremely firmly with a comparatively small army the great majority of which was Indian, for he pointed out that they were mercenary Indians who joined for the pay they got and to serve

*Chief of the Governor-General's Staff

their British masters

It was a unified force designed to serve under the British. Now that it was split and put under Indians it was beginning to disintegrate

In the old days British officers were magnificent in command of their troops, for they had one common policy, were never in doubt as to what order to give in any situation, and their troops also knew what sort of orders to expect and had been commissioned to carry out these duties loyally

Sardar Patel claimed that he had seen British officers perplexed and hesitating and mixed in their own minds as to what order to give in the terrible situation in which they now found themselves.

Brought up with the idea that they should be neither pro-one community nor the other, they found it hard to adjust themselves to being in the service of one particular dominion and their hesitation transferred itself to the men, who no longer obeyed with the same discipline

In fact he said that the army had become practically useless.

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with the Deputy Prime Minister (Sardar Patel) and Mr V P Menon on October 3, 1947

We continued the discussion more or less where we left off yesterday He started a further tirade against the Supreme Headquarters He pitied Field Marshal Auchinleck for he said he had been a great man whilst carrying out the British policy which he understood and believed in, but now he had seen the army he had created partitioned and in the process of being broken, and he and his crowd of senior British officers were all equally disillusioned and bitter, and their old friendship for the Muslims

was well on the top, either consciously or subconsciously

The British officers in command and in high positions in the three Indian services looked to Field Marshal Auchinleck and not to the Government of India for their loyalties, and their orders. The Government of India could not count on the ordinary measure of discipline, loyalty and obedience from those British officers who were supposed to be in their service

He had to admit however that they were perfectly candid and honest about this How else could one account for that amazing document when the three service Commanders had written to say that they would not carry out the policy of the Indian Government if it led to war with Pakistan

I reminded him that this document was not a British document, but had been signed by two British and one Indian officer (Air Commodore Mookerjee) It undoubtedly represented what the services thought, in my opinion both British and Indian, but it was a most improper document which no serving officer had any business to put his name to, and he would remember that the moment I pointed this out, it had been immediately withdrawn by the officers concerned

"No," he said, "I am glad they wrote it, for it has opened my eyes to their real attitude, and it is better that we should know it now than start a policy which our officers do not intend to implement"

He went on to say that no doubt the present Indian officers were quite as bad for they had been brought up and infected by the British What he wanted was an army that would obey the Government whatever orders the Government gave He wanted Hindu regiments to shoot down Hindus if ordered by the Government, and he wanted a loyal unquestioning force on which India could rely

I pointed out that it was precisely the presence of British officers which at present induced Hindu regiments to shoot at other Hindus in defence of Muslims, and that if ever the Govern-

ment of India gave such an order after the British officers were withdrawn, that order would be a great deal less likely to be carried out, though so long as men of General Thimayya's calibre were in command I was sure they would do all they could to see it was carried out

●●●

Sardar Patel started a long tirade against Field Marshal Auchinleck and the Supreme Headquarters He said, "You wil have noticed that even our Prime Minister, though heaven knows he is patient, lost his temper in the Emergency Committee meet ing this morning, and denounced the Supreme Headquarters and called upon you to wind them up at the earliest possible moment"

I replied that that was because he felt that they had been lax in getting the replacement and reserve trucks issued to the two Dominions, and because he did not understand that they had been prevented from starting this issue by the inability of the Joint Defence Council to agree on the proportions to be issued to each Dominion

"No," replied Sardar Patel, "he felt much more deeply than that, though he did not say it He has recently seen the police reports that I have been seeing about the vast traffic of illici arms into Pakistan which have been organised or at least con nived at by the Supreme Headquarters"

I told him that there was a possibility, by taking very specia steps, that the Headquarters might be closed down by the end o next month, and that this was one of the things that Lord Isma had gone to London to discuss To this Sardar Patel replied "By the end of next month practically all our arms will have been sent across to Pakistan They can well afford to wind up after that"

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with the Supreme Commander (H.E Field Marshal Sir C. Auchinleck) on October 10, 1947

The Supreme Commander brought the re-draft of his proposed paper on the closing down of the Supreme Headquarters on the 30 November This he had only changed in minor matters of drafting and I agreed to it

He told me he had spoken to Mr Jinnah who had accepted it as "Kismet " He said he could not fight against the position, but he said that the last hopes of Pakistan getting a fair distribution of stores from India would disappear with the closing down of this Headquarters.

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview between H E the Governor-General, Mr Gandhi and Lord Ismay on October 29, 1947

Lord Ismay said that he had shown Mr Attlee* the letters which had passed between the Governor-General and Mr Gandhi, in which the latter suggested that he (Mr Attlee) should decide which of the parties to the dispute, i e India or Pakistan, were "overwhelmingly in the wrong," and that "he should then withdraw every British officer in the service of the wrong party "

Mr Attlee had asked Lord Ismay to reply that he was much flattered by the suggestion, but that the role expected of him was one which it would be impossible for him, and indeed for any man,

*Clement Richard Attlee, Prime Minister of Great Britain from 1945 to 1951

to fulfil To start with, the proposal assumed that one party would be found to be much more in the wrong than the other But Mr Attlee pointed out that when political tragedies occurred, it was very seldom that the blame could be cast forthwith and without a shadow of doubt on one party alone Such verdicts had to be left to the historians

Mr Attlee had continued by saying that he would be most reluctant to withdraw from either of the two Dominions British officers willing to stay, whose services the Government of the Dominion wished to retain He could only foresee one contingent in which some such action might be forced upon him If, which God forbid, the present bitterness began to take the form of open strife beween the two Governments or their subordinates, in a form likely to involve British officers, then, whatever the rights and wrongs of the dispute might be, he had no doubt that the people of Britain would feel that the only possible course would be that British officers should be removed from participating in any such conflict

Mr Attlee concluded by saying that he thought it right to make this plan but he hoped with all his heart that the influence of those who loved peace and not strife would triumph and that they would be able to forget that such a contingency had ever had to be mentioned Mr Gandhi would therefore see that he had tried to answer his suggestion on its true merits Even if Mr Attlee had not felt as he did about it, there would, of course, have been many practical difficulties in the way of giving effect to it

Mr Gandhi appeared to be very disappointed He said that Mr Attlee had in this matter failed to show himself as a really great statesman He himself was very perturbed about the future. It had been a great mistake to make two co-equal Dominions Mutual hatred had bitten deep into men's hearts and it was impossible to see how the tragedy would ever end

The conversation then turned to the situation in Kashmir Mr

Gandhi said that the Indian troops who had been flown in would have to do or die They had had a very dangerous task entrusted to them A great risk had been taken

Lord Mountbatten said that the Chiefs of Staff had left the Defence Committee in no doubt as to the hazardous nature of the operation He himself had supported them: but when Ministers with their eyes open had decided that the operation should be undertaken, he had thrown himself into it heart and soul, and the Chiefs of Staff had done admirable work in implementing the decisions of the Defence Committee at very short notice All this was on record

Mr Gandhi said that if the Indian troops were driven back and Sheikh Abdullah* and his men stood side by side with them in defence of their hearth and homes and womenfolk, it would have a wonderful effect throughout India, whatever the outcome of the battle The fact that Muslims and Sikhs and Hindus had fought together in a common cause would be a turning point in history

On it being observed that it was satisfactory to think that there was this "silver lining to the cloud", Mr Gandhi said that it was much more than a silver lining it was a beacon of hope

Lord Mountbatten then raised the question of the conference which was to have taken place at Lahore on this very day, and which had been postponed owing to Pandit Nehru's illness Why was it, he asked, that Sardar Patel and the rest of the Indian Cabinet had been against the Governor-General and Pandit Nehru going to Lahore

Mr Gandhi said that Pandit Nehru himself took the line that he was feeling ill when he accepted Mr Jinnah's invitation to go to Lahore, and therefore that it was wrong for him to plead illness as an excuse for not going The rest of the Cabinet, on the other hand, felt that Pandit Nehru should not go to Lahore

*Leader of the National Conference Party of Kashmir

to fulfil To start with, the proposal assumed that one party would be found to be much more in the wrong than the other But Mr Attlee pointed out that when political tragedies occurred, it was very seldom that the blame could be cast forthwith and without a shadow of doubt on one party alone Such verdicts had to be left to the historians

Mr Attlee had continued by saying that he would be most reluctant to withdraw from either of the two Dominions British officers willing to stay, whose services the Government of the Dominion wished to retain He could only foresee one contingent in which some such action might be forced upon him If, which God forbid, the present bitterness began to take the form of open strife beween the two Governments or their subordinates, in a form likely to involve British officers, then, whatever the rights and wrongs of the dispute might be, he had no doubt that the people of Britain would feel that the only possible course would be that British officers should be removed from participating in any such conflict

Mr Attlee concluded by saying that he thought it right to make this plan but he hoped with all his heart that the influence of those who loved peace and not strife would triumph and that they would be able to forget that such a contingency had ever had to be mentioned Mr Gandhi would therefore see that he had tried to answer his suggestion on its true merits Even if Mr Attlee had not felt as he did about it, there would, of course, have been many practical difficulties in the way of giving effect to it

Mr Gandhi appeared to be very disappointed He said that Mr Attlee had in this matter failed to show himself as a really great statesman He himself was very perturbed about the future. It had been a great mistake to make two co-equal Dominions Mutual hatred had bitten deep into men's hearts and it was impossible to see how the tragedy would ever end

The conversation then turned to the situation in Kashmir Mr

enjoyed the complete confidence of all of them, including Sardar Patel

When further questioned as to how this alleged pro-Pakistan attitude affected the question of the Governor-General going to Lahore, Mr Gandhi said that this visit would increase the prestige of Mr Jinnah and was therefore encouraged by Lord Mountbatten's British advisers

At this point it was nearly 1 30 p m and Lord Mountbatten mentioned that he had guests for lunch

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with Mr Jayaprakash Narayan, on October 18, 1947*

I had originally asked to see Mr Jayaprakash Narayan when I arrived out in March, as I heard he was in Delhi, and it was important to consult the leader of the coming Socialist Party He however had left Delhi before I could make contact with him and the next time he came back, so far as I know, was after the June 3 Plan had been announced

He refused (very wisely from his point of view) to come and see me since he doubtless feared that a visit by him would be taken as supporting the plan with which he was not in agreement

However now that the transfer of power is more than two months old, Her Excellency managed to get him to see her through a mutual friend, and after half an hour I joined them for a further twenty minutes

I regretted that he had not come to see me on his own when I first arrived out, and when his views could have been of great value to me, I told him I quite saw why he did not come and see

*Leader of the Socialist Party of India

me after the June 3 Plan

I asked him whether he still disagreed with the June 3 Plan, and if so, what his alternative would have been

He replied that he was a complete supporter of Mr Gandhi's plan, that is that we should have turned over power to a central government, and have offered Mr Jinnah the Premiership and the right to form the Cabinet

I replied that such a solution would have required the concurrence of the Congress Party, and that neither Mr Gandhi nor I had been able to obtain this.

Even so, I had put the plan to Mr Jinnah who had turned it down for the reason that the first time the Legislature had been called, his Government would have been turned out of power, since they would not have commanded a majority, in the Legislature

Mr Jayaprakash Narayan admitted that it required the agreement of both parties and regretted that it had not been forthcoming

I then asked him, "Do you consider that I could have found another solution for the transfer of power?" He replied, "No, no other solution was possible from the time that you arrived out in March, but if you had come out two years or even one year earlier, there is no doubt that we need never have had a partition of India on theocratic lines"

I told him in confidence that I still thought that a considerable unification of India was possible I told him that one of the reasons why I had accepted the invitation to remain on was that I had hoped by April to arrange a close union between the Dominion of India and Pakistan

The Cabinet Mission Plan had involved no less than three separate groups, 'A', 'B' and 'C' 'A' consisting of Central and Southern India would have been a much smaller union than the present Dominion of India, but would have been reasonably

compact with tight control of the Group Government.

Groups 'B' and 'C' on the other hand, would have included large areas of non-Muslim populations in the East Punjab, West Bengal and Assam, thus precluding are really satisfactory Group Government for 'B' and 'C' The final link-up was only going to be on Defence, External Affairs and Communications, and the States would only have come in on this final link-up

The June 3 Plan had the merit of having only two groups with the autonomy of the Dominion having a tight central government The States would accede to one or other of these Dominions and he closely associated with them, far closer in practice than under the Cabinet Mission scheme, though no closer in theory

Already I had got the Joint Defence Council set up I hoped bit by bit to strengthen this Council by the addition of additional ministers until finally the following portfolios would be represented Prime Minister, Defence Minister, External Affairs Minister, Communications Minister and Finance Minister At this stage I should like to change the title to "Joint Defence and Policy Council" in which the economic planning for the whole subcontinent as well as a common foreign policy could be worked out

He was very excited at this prospect, and wished me all luck I told him that I thought the terrible suspicion and hostility engendered by the communal riots might make it very difficult to implement He agreed, but pointed out that Pakistan might be in a somewhat chastened mood, having had to face such grave difficulties in the early stages, and might therefore be willing to come into such an arrangement and he was quite sure that the majority of the Government of India would welcome such an arrangement anyhow

Finally, I asked him what the policy of the Socialist Party of India was going to be in the near future He replied that he felt the sooner they could break away from the Congress and stand

as a separate party, the better To this end they were considering putting up policy proposals at the next AICC meeting in November, which he felt the Congress Party would be unable to endorse This would give them the opportunity of cutting adrift

I told him that this might be the right action from his point of view, but it might also prove the wrong moment to implement it, for if the reactionary and big-business interests saw this threat developing before communal tension and bloodshed had ceased, they might be tempted to encourage the continuance of communal strife, which would make it essential for all parties in India to rally behind the present Government, which in turn would put back the prospects of the Socialist Party

He replied that he entirely saw the point, and would consider the matter carefully, but he felt that unless the ordinary common people of India could be given some alternative hope he did not see how they could be ever raised out of their misery or a measure of permanent insecurity be avoided I told him that I thought that India was quite insufficiently developed for western democracy to work on all levels, and that it was first necessary to raise the standard of living, and above all, the standard of education of the people, though I fully accepted that this might well be the plan of his own Party at the moment

He promised to come back and visit at the next time there was an opportunity

Record of Governor-General's Interview with V P Menon on October 28, 1947

Mr V P Menon came round in a state of great excitement and more worried than I ever remember seeing him He told me that immediately on leaving the Defence Committee, Nehru had gone home and had to lie down he was so upset, and felt so ill.

(Both Lieut -Col Erskine Crum* who came in later and I, had noted that he was looking very ill and run down)

Pandit Nehru managed to get up for the Cabinet meeting at which apparently there had been a great scene, and at which Pandit Nehru had insisted on standing by the arrangement which I had made to fly to Lahore, however ill he was.

Mr V P Menon pointed out that Pandit Nehru's anxiety not to let me down was so great he would be prepared to go even at the risk of his health I told him I should not ever wish this to happen, and authorised him to give a message to Sardar Patel who was very worried about Pandit Nehru's health, that if he really were too ill, I would be agreeable to postpone the visit until either one or the other Prime Minister was fit enough to fly to meet his colleague, and I would urge Mr Jinnah either to come here or receive our visit when everyone was fit again

Top Secret

Meeting with the Opposition Leaders (London)
Record of Governor-General's Interview

I saw Mr Anthony Eden† at the Dorchester Hotel for one hour on 18 November In the evening of the same day I saw Mr R.A. Butler‡ for about a quarter of an hour, and Sir John Anderson and Lord Simon for three or four minutes at the party at Buckingham Palace

I was able, I hope, to answer all their questions about India to their satisfaction, and in particular, of course, gave Mr Eden the

*Lieutenant-Colonel V F Erskine Crum, Conference Secretary to the Governor-General of India

†Robert Anthony Eden of the British Conservative Party who became the Prime Minister from 19 April-January 1957

‡Baron Richard Austen Butler of the British Conservative Party who became the Deputy Prime Minister in 1962

complete background of the transfer of power, the partition, the massacres, Junagadh, Kashmir, and Hyderabad

I saw Mr Winston Churchill for one hour on November 19; and as his line was so extraordinary, it is worth recording

He welcomed me with the utmost warmth, held me by the arm, patted me on the back, expressed his great affection for me, gave me a glass of port and a cigar, and then produced such a tirade against the Congress Party and my Government as would have seemed quite incredible if his views on the subject were not fairly well known

He then built up the Muslims as the friends of the British, the people we should be supporting and looking after, and said it was terrible to think that I, an Englishman and a cousin of the King, should have got myself into a position where I was now backing those enemies of Britain—Nehru, Patel and party—against those proven friends of many years—the Muslims

I reminded him that it was precisely because I feared that there would be difficulty if I stayed with one party that I had asked Lord Ismay to see him to obtain his advice before I accepted I had been greatly influenced by Mr Churchill's advice and accepted the appointment, and if I was in a difficult position now it was through following Mr Churchill's advice

He countered this by saying that his advice now was that I should get out as quickly as I could and not involve the King and my country in further backing traitors

I told him that I intended to leave in April, that I considered if I left before that I should not only be letting down the one Dominion that had asked for a British Governor-General, but that the repercussions on Pakistan of the removal of a steadying influence could hardly be to Pakistan's advantage.

He then went on to say that India was determined to strangle Pakistan He had it on good authority, he said, that no equipment, stores, tanks, or aircraft which rightfully belonged to Pakistan, would find their way across the frontier.

I told him of the steps taken by the Joint Defence Council to ensure an equitable division of this equipment, etc I pointed out that although the proportions of population were only 7 33, the Joint Defence Council had in fact agreed to give Pakistan equipment and arms in the proportion of two This appeared to be news to him

He then went on to say that the beautiful arms and equipment which the British had given to India were now being turned by the Indians against the friends of Britain He accused me of having planned and organised the first victory of Hindustan (he refused to call it India) against Pakistan by sending in British trained soldiers and British equipment to crush and oppress the Muslims in Kashmir, and to take by force a country which clearly belonged to Pakistan

I took Mr Churchill right through the events in Kashmir, from my visit to the Maharaja in July up to the time of my coming home for the wedding All this was clearly news to him, but he did not seem altogether to take in what I was explaining

He then told me that he had it on Lord Ismay's personal authority that not less than 500,000 and perhaps 600,000 people had been slaughtered in the massacres

I told him that although we had all at one time thought the figures were very high, the latest information was that they had been grossly exaggerated I quoted the case of the Hindu refugee train near Sialkot, which was shot up by the Muslims 2,000 had been reported killed, but on investigation it turned out to be only 31 I told him that we were endeavouring to obtain the correct official figures of the killed and that if these were ready before Lord Ismay left I would ask Lord Ismay to let him know the figures unofficially upon his return to England

Finally, Mr Churchill said he would send round a paper which had been handed to him and he would be grateful if I could answer this paper

I told him I should not have time to do so before I left, but

that I would ask Lord Ismay to bring him back a verbal answer.

Note of an Interview with the Deputy Prime Minister (Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel) on February 4, 1948

•••

Patel said that the credit of India was now at the lowest ebb. When they had tried to float their public loan of 50 crores, it had remained unsubscribed Who would have believed that the Government of a free India asking their people for a relatively small loan would fail to obtain any support whatever This gave an idea of how low the internal credit of the Government had sunk, and this of course was linked with foreign credit, so that no loans could be looked for from outside

He told me that the reason for this lack of confidence was the disastrous budget introduced by the Interim Government by Mr Liaquat Ali Khan I pointed out that the latter had introduced this budget for the express purpose of embarrassing the Congress Party in general and Sardar Patel in particular, and that I assumed that now that the Muslim League were no longer in the Cabinet, it should not be difficult to put matters right

Sardar Patel said it was for this precise reason that he had managed to get Mr Shanmukham Chetty into the Cabinet His handling of the Finance portfolio and his public statements, particularly at the time of the interim budget, had begun to restore public confidence But unfortunately the Prime Minister and Dr Matthai* went round making statements which had not previously been cleared by the Cabinet which undermined all the good work which he and Mr Chetty were doing

Sardar Patel said that he was by no means against nationalisation and high taxes As a complete disciple of Mahatma Gandhi's

*Dr John Matthai, Minister for Transport and Railways in the Government of India.

he had renounced private property and stood to gain nothing from capitalism as such. But India at this time was not sufficiently advanced for socialism to work The Government would not be able to produce a sufficient number of trained and educated administrators to run the nationalised industries The Government, without the credit to raise loans, would not be able to finance all these great schemes Sardar Patel said the only way to raise the standard of living of the people was to industrialise the country by every possible means which would include a measure of nationalised communal credit industries, but would principally depend on private enterprise He was in favour of curbing their activities so that they would not exploit the people, but it was necessary to restore the confidence of private enterprise in the future

Finally, if this could not be achieved, India would not be strong enough to maintain even a small army and her position vis-a-vis Pakistan and the world would be hopelessly compromised

He told me that no less than four Ministers had informed him a day or two before the Mahatma's assassination of their intention to resign (Messrs Neogy, Mukherjee, Bhabha and Chetty). Their reasons were that the Prime Minister appointed committees which concerned their departments without consulting them and also passed orders over their heads Their resignations had only been held up by the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi

Sardar Patel was prepared to remain and work loyally with Pandit Nehru but only if some agreement could be reached which would keep the Cabinet together as a happy team

I told him that I proposed to speak to Pandit Nehru about this at my interview the following day, but he begged me not to say that he had come to me with all these troubles I pointed out that I knew most of the history from Mahatma Gandhi and proposed to quote him as my source of information Sardar Patel seemed relieved and agreed to this

Finally, I told him that I did not consider the Prime Minister to be the only sinner on constitutional procedure, for I did not like the way Sardar Patel appointed Information Officers to the various Embassies and High Commissioners' offices without reference to the Commonwealth Relations Ministry and without making them clearly subordinate to the Ambassador or High Commissioner concerned He told me that if I was quoting the case of Sudhir Ghosh and Krishna Menon* that this was due to the former's ignorance and the latter's intolerance I admitted that this was partly the cause of the trouble but I thought it was more fundamental I told him that it appeared to me that he was trying to get his nominees in everywhere, and that his influence in the Public Service Commission was such that Civil Servants had to look to him rather than to the Prime Minister for their future I told him that I could not expect to act as a peace-maker unless both sides were prepared to admit their mistakes and mutually join together to put matters right for the future

Note of an Interview with the Prime Minister on February 5, 1948

The last three quarters of an hour I spent alone with the Prime Minister I gave him a pretty full account of my interview with Sardar Patel the previous day, and congratulated him on the statement which had appeared in the press today (5th) that he and Sardar Patel intended to stand together side by side

I told him of my statement to Mahatma Gandhi that, quite apart from differences of outlook, ideology and temperament, needless friction was being caused between the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister on account of faulty procedure I first pointed out where I thought Sardar Patel had been wrong in

*V K Krishna Menon, High Commissioner for India in the United Kingdom from August 1947

trying to introduce his own selected nominees into the Embassies and High Commission offices abroad without proper reference to the Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations. I also mentioned the fact that he was getting too tight a control of the civil services to the detriment of the Prime Minister's position

I then went on to tell the Prime Minister what I had told Gandhi and Sardar Patel about his own shortcomings I told him that in my opinion not even Mr Churchill, in the heyday of his power, would have dared to ride roughshod over his ministers in the way that Pandit Nehru appeared to be doing, I quoted the case of his orders on a financial matter for Kashmir without reference to the Ministry of States and, as far as I knew, without prior reference to the Ministry of Finance

Pandit Nehru hotly denied the latter charge, but admitted he had been wrong in not bringing the Ministry of States into the picture

I then pointed out how much Sardar Patel had been riled at his sending his Principal Private Secretary, Mr Iengar, to Ajmer without consulting Sardar Patel in his capacity as Home Minister since in this case he was responsible for Ajmer as a Chief Commissioner's Province Pandit Nehru explained that this had come about through his being unable to fulfil a promise to visit Ajmer as arranged with Sardar Patel, on account of his nephew's death. He had therefore sent Mr Iengar down to explain to the people of Ajmer how it was that he could not keep his promise

I told the Prime Minister that other Ministers, such as Dr Mukherjee and Mr Bhabha, were hurt at the way he had set up committees of development and planning without consulting them though their ministries were obviously interested Pandit Nehru expressed complete surprise at this and was not quite clear about the case I advised him to obtain particulars from Sardar Patel.

The Prime Minister defended himself by saying that the last

thing he wished to do was to act in an unconstitutional manner. On the contrary, he always dealt through the Ministers, and his Secretaries dealt through the ministries So far from short-circuiting them, they themselves were holding up vital matters He quoted in particular an instance where the Home Ministry had held up arrangements which the Cabinet had approved for a committee to examine candidates for temporary service in the police force for more than three months, and still nothing had been done

I pointed out to the Prime Minister that the correct way of dealing with this sort of thing was by the method I had adopted in the Emergency Committee, namely, to call for reports on any urgent matter on which the Cabinet had given a ruling I suggested that each time the Cabinet went into Committee to consider reports, those reports should specifically include progress on items of this nature

Pandit Nehru stated that he still could hardly believe that Ministers were dissatisfied with the way he was handling affairs. I told him that this was due to their great devotion to him and their anxiety not to add to the burdens of his worries I said that even such a loyal devoted friend as Rajkumari Amrit Kaur* had told me that but for her great devotion to him she could never have accepted the degree of high-handedness in interference over questions of health measures for the refugees to which she had to submit

I warned him that I thought the feeling in the Cabinet was stronger than he knew of, and I urged him to go and have a heart-to-heart talk with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel at the first opportunity, and to quote my conversation and really get to the bottom of all the trouble and put matters right This he willingly promised to do

*Mahatma Gandhi's Personal Secretary, Minister for Health in the Government of India

Note of an Interview with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel on February 14, 1948

•••

At 7 25 that evening Mr Choudhury, Director of Broadcasting, had come round to see Sardar Patel with a script of the Prime Minister's broadcast, in which he considered there were two objectionable paragraphs The first concerned his admission that there were temperamental differences between himself (Nehru) and Sardar Patel The Deputy Prime Minister had taken the view that this was an excellent admission to make, since it would make a subsequent declaration of friendship and unanimity the more convincing The second point was more difficult, since Pandit Nehru intended to deny the correctness of the report in the press about his condemnation of Jayaprakash Narayan This, Sardar Patel thought, would do Pandit Nehru a great deal of harm, but as far as he was concerned he did not mind it He had therefore left it to Choudhury to go round and put the matter to Prime Minister.

Towards the end of our interview we moved next door and heard the Prime Minister's broadcast His speech was delivered unamended. On the way out Sardar Patel said sadly to me, "You see! I knew Panditji could not be deflected from his unfortunate purpose "

I had however, earlier in our conversation, asked him how his relations with Pandit were now, and he replied, "Much better You needn't worry, we shall pull along together "

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with Acharya Narendra Dev, Vice-Chancellor of Lucknow University, on February 19, 1948

I told him I had been informed that he was the real force

behind the Socialist Party in India, that Jayaprakash Narayan did as he was told Mr Narendra Dev shrugged his shoulders and said that I exaggerated his position, but that he certainly admitted being one of the founders of the Socialist Party

I told him how sorry I was that Jayaprakash Narayan had not accepted my original invitation along with other party leaders to come and see me on my first arrival in India nearly a year ago In the first instance this had been due to his leaving Delhi, by a coincidence, the very day I sent the message inviting him When he subsequently came back it must have been clear to him that I was being forced into accepting partition, and since this was against the Socialist Party's policy, I took off my hat to him as an astute tactician in refusing to come and see me, since his very visit might have implied his agreement with a theocratic division

Mr Narendra Dev smiled and said he thought I had summed up the position very accurately

I then told him that when Jayaprakash Narayan came to see me after the transfer of power, and while the riots were still on, he informed me that the Socialist Party were contemplating breaking away from the Congress in November I told him that whereas I agreed that this was the right ultimate policy, I disagreed profoundly with the timing, which I thought was much too premature I told him I thought the country ought to have a chance to settle down, and surmount the present communal difficulties and grapple with the refugee problem and with Pakistan I urged that the Socialist Party should remain within the Congress during this period and to reconsider carefully the moment of quitting

Mr Narendra Dev told me that he not only agreed with what I had said, but that he had been largely instrumental in preventing the Socialist Party from breaking away in November Further he had no intention of supporting any movement to break away at this moment, particularly since Mahatma Gandhi's lamented death

He said that the Socialist Party had unbounded faith in Pandit Nehru, but of course recognised in Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel their deadly enemy

He asked me whether the latter would lead the reactionary forces in Congress to introduce a measure forbidding the existence of any separate parties within Congress If he were successful this would prevent the Socialist Party from remaining as a party within the Congress Party The consequence of this would be not the dissolution of the Socialist Party and its absorption into the Congress, but the driving of the Socialist Party out as a party into opposition

I asked him if he thought Sardar Patel would welcome this and he replied that he thought he would, for he obviously had his hands tied in attacking the Socialist Party while they were within Congress whereas once they were outside, he could really attack them in a way that at present he attacked the Communist Party

I then asked Mr Narendra Dev whether there was any likelihood of the Socialist Party and the Communists joining up in India: and he replied that there was none whatever He personally, Jayaprakash Narayan, and all the leaders of the Socialist Party were violently opposed to communism Jayaprakash had even refused to receive any of the communist leaders, and in general he did not think communism at all suitable to India at this stage.

He said that the future was largely in the hands of Pandit Nehru if he had the moral courage to follow his own socialistic professions and suport the Socialist Party against the right wing of Congress If he did that, the future of the Socialist Party was assured, otherwise if driven into opposition their position at the outset would be rather week

I told him that it was Mahatma Gandhi's last wish that Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel should compose their differences and stand together to form a united front against communalism and Pakistan, and to start to the reconstruction programme, at all

events for a few months

Mr Narendra Dev surprised me by saying that he thought this policy was quite right, that he thought it an excellent thing that the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister should remain good friends and work together for a few more months, but he wanted them to work together with the Socialist Party, and he did not want the Socialist Party driven out too soon

I told him that I thought that he was absolutely right in the views that he held, but that I recommended that before the next AICC meeting he should go and have it out with Sardar Patel, separately and before the meeting

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with Dr B C Roy, Premier of West Bengal, on March 8, 1948

•••

The main topic of our conversation, however, was the prospect of East and West Bengal amalgamating again Dr Roy said that this was a topic that was on almost everyone's lips, and he had had offers from leading Muslims to go round doing propaganda with Hindus in both East and West Bengal to bring the two Provinces together again

I asked Dr Roy what conditions he envisaged for the amalgamation He replied that people were at present talking of United Bengal becoming an independent entity, in relation with the Union of India and Pakistan

I told him that at the suggestion of Mr Suhrawardy* I had put up such a proposal to the Congress Party, and that Mr Kripalani†, Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel, after consulting their

*H S Suhrawardy, Muslim political leader of East Pakistan who was the Chief Minister of Bengal from 1946

†Acharya J B Kripalani, President of the Congress Party.

colleagues, had emphatically turned down any idea of a united independent Bengal I could not believe that their views would have changed, the more so since they had had to give up the idea of an independent NWFP on account of this very policy

We next discussed the possibility of West and East Bengal joining up directly under Pakistan, and this Dr Roy said he was sure no Hindu would ever agree to

So we came to the final alternative a united Bengal forming part of the Indian Union Dr Roy thought that the Pakistan Central Government would never agree to this I agreed. and asked him how he thought Pakistan could stop East Bengal from seceding from the rest of Pakistan and joining the Indian Union I pointed out that they could not send any troops by land, sea or air without their being intercepted by the Indian Union, and that sort of physical violence they had no means of imposing their will on East Bengal, since more than 40 out of the total 70 million people in Pakistan resided in East Bengal

Dr Roy wondered whether the Muslims of East Bengal would be prepared to take such a drastic step as to secede from the rest of Pakistan against the will of Mr Jinnah I replied that that depended entirely on how the West Bengal Government and the Central Government treated the problem If West Bengal was prepared to go out of their way to be friendly to the Muslims of both East and West Bengal, then they might well create conditions in which the Muslims of East Bengal would feel sufficiently secure as to come over, and some of the more adventurous ones might be ready to take office in West Bengal, if the Premier could see his way to offering really good posts both in the Ministry and in the civil services and other appointments to Muslims, and if the Government of East Bengal could be consistently friendly towards Muslims, then it seemed to me that there was a good chance that East Bengal might voluntarily wish to join up with West Bengal

However, I said that this was entirely a problem for the two Bengal provinces themselves

B. MAHATMA GANDHI'S FAST AND ASSASSINATION

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with Mahatma Gandhi on January 12, 1948

Mahatma Gandhi came to see me at 6 30 p m. and after he had knocked off his slipper and tucked his legs up under his shawl in the armchair in his usual manner, he smiled at me benignly and said, "I hope you will not be angry with me for taking an important decision without consulting you " He then proceeded to tell me that he had decided to undertake a fast until Hindu-Muslim good feeling had been restored in Delhi, for at present he said order was only being kept by the police and military

He told me that every day valued Muslim friends came to see him and said, What shall we do? Shall we stay and risk death? Shall we go to Pakistan and give up the struggle?"

He had consistently advised them to stay and suffer death a thousand times rather than run away, but he felt it was cowardly to go on giving them this advice when they had to take all the risks, and he felt that he himself should set an example by himself taking a grave risk He had therefore decided to go on a fast until death, or until conditions all over India had improved or at all events in the Capital, Delhi

I asked him whether he had consulted Panditji or Sardar Patel (i e the Prime Minister or Deputy Prime Minister) or anybody else, and he replied, "No! You are the first person I have told since the announcement was read at my prayer meeting just now. Until a few moments ago it was my day of silence, and so I have not discussed the matter with anybody "

Realising that nothing I could now say would make the old man change his mind, and recognising the extreme courage of his action based on his whole life's creed and convictions, I thought it best to cheer him up, and so I said, "Why should I be angry? I think it is the most magnificent and fine thing anybody could possibly do I do not pretend to understand exactly how these fasts work, since they would not have the desired effect, for example, in England, but since they appear to work in India and definitely work in Calcutta, I can only admire you immensely for this courageous step, and what is more, I am certain that you will succeed where all else had failed "

Mahatma Gandhi could not conceal his pleasure at this support, and I heard on all hands afterwards, that is from Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, the Prime Minister and the Mahatma's son, Devdas Gandhi, how greatly he had been encouraged by the line I had taken

I pointed out that by his timing he had made his task doubly difficult, since it followed so soon on the massacre in Karachi and the massacre in the refugee train from the north-west frontier, but he appeared to take the line that on the contrary this was a good time, and his son Devdas Gandhi told me that he thought that his father had deliberately chosen to carry out the fast at a moment when there was a serious danger of reprisals in India and in particular Delhi

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with the Deputy Prime Minister (Sardar V Patel) and Mr V P Menon on January 13, 1948

Sardar Patel was in a very curious mood about the Mahatma's fast He said he resented this unilateral decision without consulting either the Prime Minister or himself He said that the timing

was hopelessly wrong A week ago it would have been all right, but now that the massacres at Karachi and in the refugee train from the frontier had taken place, the Hindus and Sikhs would say that his fast was directed against them, and it would have the opposite effect to what the Mahatma hoped

He expressed the view that the only way to re-establish decent relationship between the Muslim and non-Muslim communities was to remove every Hindu and Sikh from Pakistan and to drive out the Muslims from the East Punjab and the affected neighbouring areas Then he said communal harmony would be restored since no more massacres, looting, and oppression could take place

I asked him, what about the four crores of Muslims in the rest of India, and he replied that their situation had remained unchanged throughout all the troubles and that their greatest safety lay in the complete removal of incidents

I told him that I felt that the policy of keeping the Muslims in the Capital city was not only right but essential for communal harmony in India He was inclined to disagree but said that if that were indeed necessary, the only way of achieving it would be to keep order forcibly by the police and the military

Top Secret

Record of Governor General's Interview with Sardar K M Panikkar on January 16, 1948*

Sardar Panikkar told His Excellency that Mahatma Gandhi had once undertaken a fast because Mrs Gandhi had "stolen" a piece of hand-made silk, containing an address, to give to her grandchild (it was the custom to give newly-born children pieces of cloth)

*Prime Minister of Bikaner from 1944 Later selected as the Indian Ambassador to China

The present fast was for a very different purpose, however. Sardar Patel had, in his Lucknow speech, said, "We will reply to this in Lahore, Gujarat and Rawalpindi." Although this was not reported in the newspapers, Mahatma Gandhi had come to hear of it. All Sardar Patel's actions, such as ordering the Muslims out of Gurgaon half an hour after Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar had persuaded them to return to their homes, were known to Mahatma Gandhi.

When Mahatma Gandhi had arrived in Delhi, he had said to Sardar Patel: "We have been one for 30 years, but now I see that we are two." At this Sardar Patel had wept and promised to behave—but hadn't.

Sardar Panikkar said that he himself had had a "stand-up row" with Sardar Patel, when last he had seen him, on the issue of marching into West Punjab. Very few people spoke to Sardar Patel frankly these days—which was a very dangerous thing.

Sardar Panikkar said that, if it came to a row between Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel, he would not give the latter a 10-1 chance if the case was properly presented to the country. There was no question but that Pandit Nehru would carry the country with him. The Indian people would "always flatter those in power, but always support those who were right." In his view Mahatma Gandhi's fast would tip the scale, and Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel would come together again.

Sardar Panikkar said that he had not the least hesitation in recommending His Excellency to visit Mahatma Gandhi at Birla House. His Excellency said that he would arrange to do this, probably accompanied by Her Excellency, soon after his return to Delhi.

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with the Prime Minister on January 13, 1948

●●●

Nehru told me for my private information, that he could not conceal his pleasure as well as his admiration at Mahatma's fast for he said this was needed to bring our people to their senses. He thanked me for having spoken [illegible] to him about his fast the night before, and revealed to me that Mahatma Gandhi had not told him of his decision to fast even though he was with him for an hour before the prayer meeting, and just before the Mahatma came to see me He said, "I have known him for 32 years and I still can never guarantee that I can fathom his mind"

Note of an Interview with the Hon'ble Sardar Baldev Singh, Defence Minister, on Friday, January 23, 1948

Sardar Baldev Singh, however, told me that this was not the general view and on being pressed for the general view he confessed that people thought that the sole reason for Gandhiji's fast was to force the Government of India to hand over the 55 crores to Pakistan He considered that this was the greatest slap in the face that the Government of India had ever received and that had there been an Opposition Party in the Legislative Assembly, they would undoubtedly have brought about the downfall of the Government on this issue

I informed Sardar Baldev Singh that Gandhiji had raised the matter of the balances with me for the first time after he had already decided on his fast and I could not for one moment believe that that was the reason for his fast I also gave him a little of the background of my discussions with the Prime

Minister and Sardar Patel on this matter

Sardar Baldev Singh, whilst admitting that I might not have known that that was the reason for Gandhiji's fast, still adhered to his view He went so far as to say that he was present at Birla House when the decision was announced to pay the 55 crores and he had then taken a bet with Mr G D Birla that Gandhiji would break his fast within 48 hours since he had now achieved the object of his fast

The Minister went on to say that it was deplorable that after the Deputy Prime Minister had made his statement in the House about not paying the 55 crores until the Kashmir issue was settled, and after the Prime Minister had made a statement to the same effect and added that no military stores would be sent to Pakistan for the time being, after the Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister had given a Press interview explaining the position, that then one old man fasting should have been able to make a mockery of the unanimous decision.

I pointed out that as far as the military stores were concerned, Pandit Nehru himself was a party to the decision at the last Joint Defence Council meeting at Lahore to expedite the transfer of stores to Pakistan and that this was certainly not under the pressure of the fast, which was not even in contemplation at that time

Nothing I could say, however, could shake Sardar Baldev Singh from his cheerful pessimism and as he left he said, ' Our Government has received a very severe blow to its prestige and only the absence of an argument has enabled us to recover from it "

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with the Prime Minister on February 1, 1948

I began by expressing my heartfelt feelings about the death of

Mahatma Gandhi whom I had come to look on as a real friend. I begged the Prime Minister to take the utmost precautions about his own safety as I thought that if there were a widespread plot, he would be the next person on the list for assassination

I urged him to come and live with us at Government House, and pointed out that we intended to give up the south-east wing to Government servants to enable their hostels to be vacated for refugees He expressed his gratitude but did not think he could possibly take advantage of the offer which would only indicate that the Government did not intend to take a firm line with the plotters He did however say that he would not mind if I spoke to the Home Minister about increasing his protection.

I told him I had a great number of items which I must discuss with him some time, but I did not propose to add to his burden at this sad time, and I told him I would arrange for another interview in the near future to deal with them

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with His Excellency, Mr C. Rajagopalachari, Governor of West Bengal, on February 1, 1948

After condoling the loss of our great friend Mahatma Gandhi, he said to me that he considered it was vital, now that Pandit Nehru had lost his principal supporter and friend, that I should stay to take his place He did not think that India could possibly spare me and he hoped that I would not adhere to my plan to go in the summer He was clearly so worked up over this that I evaded the issue and we were soon discussing the whole political situation in India

He said that although he felt that the Mahatma's life could ill be spared for the next two or three years that this was the end he himself would have preferred, to die quickly and compara-

tively painlessly, and at the same time to be able to serve by his death the cause of non-violence and communal friendship which had been so dear to his heart in life How fortunate it was that it was a Hindu who had killed him For if it had been a Sikh, it would have caused internal trouble, and if a Muslim, war between the two dominions

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with His Excellency Dr K N Katju, Governor of Orissa, on Febuary 1, 1948

He thought that the reaction of all the Prime Ministers and Governors and public officials and press in Pakistan to Mahatma Gandhiji's death had been magnificent, and he described it as a glorious white cloth woven by their feelings of goodwill, and stained only by one black blotch by Mr Jinnah's typically unfriendly statement

I said we must rise above Mr Jinnah whose mind was known to be warped and think of the beauty of the rest of the white cloth He agreed and then wondered whether it would not be the appropriate moment for a great gesture to be made on the lines that the Mahatma would most have liked He suggested therefore that five thousand refugees on each side of the Punjab border should cross back to their original homes and be received with public demonstrations of joy as a symbol of the end of communal distrust and strife

I advised him to put this not only to Pandit Nehru but above all to Sardar Patel who would be the most difficult one to convince

He told me that the merger of the Orissa states into the Province transformed the whole outlook for the Province and even for the people of those states

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with the Deputy Prime Minister, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, on February 4, 1948

I greeted him very warmly and affectionately and told him how glad I was that the misunderstanding which had arisen between us over my speech at Nagpur had at last been cleared up through his daughter (Miss Maniben Patel) attacking me last night when she came to see my wife on this very subject

I pointed out that although my speech might be misread as indicating that I had known of Mahatma Gandhi's fast 15 hours before anybody else, in point of fact he had not told me that I was the first individual person whom he had told, but this was only in reply to my question whether he had consulted Pandit Nehru or Sardar Patel.

Sardar Patel was most generous and told me not to think any more about it

I told him of my discussion with Mahatma Gandhi about the split between the Prime Minister and himself, and that I had been instrumental in convincing the Mahatma that he was wrong in permitting the split and should do everything in his power to postpone it for as long as possible

Sardar Patel told me that Mahatma Gandhi had told him of this conversation at his last interview one hour before he was killed He had told him all that had passed between us at this interview including my criticisms of the procedure of both the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister. He had called upon Sardar Patel to remain together with Pandit Nehru and had said he was going to have a similar conversation with Pandit Nehru at which he would discuss the improper procedure he had been using

Mahatma Gandhi had further said he would state that every afternoon at his prayer meeting that people were wrong in

supposing that Sardar Patel had acted in any way in an improper manner or could be blamed in any way for his attitude towards the communal disturbances It was therefore a double blow to Sardar Patel that the Mahatma was killed before being able to make this statement

He said that the position in the country was now very serious. Pandit Nehru, much as he admired and respected him, as well as loved him, had never understood the Hindu mind (It is of interest that Mrs Naidu, the Governor of the United Provinces, told me the same thing earlier the same day and said that he had a completely English education, outlook and mind She told me this to point out how much value he got from friendship

Although he was very good at addressing large crowds and at swaying their emotions temporarily, and although he drew inspiration in a remarkable way from these crowds that enabled him to address them successfully, he unfortunately could not hold the vast masses of the Hindu people.

The Hindus were a simple people who felt that they were put upon by Pakistan Before the fast, the Government was beginning to gain their confidence by its firm handling of Pakistan over the Kashmir and other questions Since the fast and the lamentable climb-down over the 55 crores, most of that confidence had disappeared

I asked him how the news of the differences between Pandit Nehru and himself had become so well-known, since Mahatma Gandhi had discussed them with me in complete secrecy He explained that unfortunately at the last Cabinet meeting before he had gone to Kathiawar matters had reached such a pitch that he had to inform the Prime Minister in the Cabinet that he would be unable to continue in office He had asked Mahatma Gandhi for his concurrence in relinquishing office and to help him in obtaining an expeditious release He had been astounded when Mahatma Gandhi had reversed his whole outlook and pressed him to stay

SECTION II: THE COMMUNAL PROBLEM

A. COMMUNAL CARNAGE

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with Field Marshal Auchinleck on September 8, 1947

Field Marshal Auchinleck came to see me in order to tell me that he considered that he knew the solution to the present trouble in Delhi. This was to deal mercilessly with the Sikhs as a community; to arrest all those who were seen on the streets; and to shoot those who were found carrying a weapon of any sort. He said that he and his Intelligence organisation had been watching the Sikhs carefully for a period of about a month; and that they had foreseen the present situation arising but not in quite such a serious form as had actually occurred. Under his plan it would not be necessary to search houses. If all Sikhs found in the open were arrested he believed that those taking shelter in other people's houses would be ejected pretty soon. He considered it of great importance that the Government should take very drastic action—this must be something that would strike the public imagination. He suggested that the Sikhs who were arrested should be kept for, say, 48 hours without anything to eat or drink.

After the Supreme Commander had been with him for three-quarters of an hour, General Lockhart pointed out that Sardar

Patel had already announced his intention of dealing strongly with the Sikh trouble-makers He had seen Patel that afternoon and had been given what amounted to a free hand to take whatever measures he considered necessary. He had already given orders that the primary object of the exercise was to get after the Sikhs He fully agreed that they were in fact responsible for the "reign of terror"—particularly among Muslim servants in bungalows in New Delhi, but he felt that this reign of terror had been very considerably exaggerated. He confirmed that he had put guards on the houses of the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister and he said that a new Regiment of Madrassis (the 4th Madras Regiment) was just arriving in Delhi as reinforcements This was a first-class unit and had established a good reputation for complete impartiality

At this stage the Supreme Commander left, and a little later V P Menon came in The latter was very keen that extremely drastic action should be taken to arrest the situation But he was very doubtful, from the political point of view, of the desirability of discriminating between communities and giving orders that only Sikhs should be arrested He wanted what he called a "general" provision rather than a "particular" provision This opinion was backed up by Lord Ismay who drew attention to the disastrous effects on the Sikh troops in the army that discrimination against the Sikhs in Delhi might have General Bucher came out on the same side He said that from his experience of command in Calcutta he was full of apprehension against taking action against any one community This applied particularly to the Sikhs as such action would make them coalesce both in the Punjab and more particularly in the Sikh states, and then they would become even more dangerous still In Calcutta in fact, the Sikhs had been ever more responsible for the trouble than they were at present in Delhi, but there no discrimination had been made and orders had been given that anybody armed, regardless of community, should be shot on sight

General Bucher also suggested the possibility of the declaration of martial law by the local (Indian) military authorities in particular areas or sectors of the city This idea seemed admirable as it got over the difficulty of having to bring back high-level British officers in control as a more general declaration of martial law would necessitate I therefore said that I would raise it at the Emergency Committee Meeting the following day

After further discussion of how best to stamp out the Delhi troubles, it was decided that General Lockhart should, on his own responsibility, issue to the army that from dawn the following day anybody found with arms on the streets should either be shot on sight or arrested and put into a concentration camp It was agreed that the primary object must be to round up the Sikhs, but that there should be no apparent discrimination in this regard Therefore, the object would have been achieved if in 48 hours' time the local graves and concentration camps were occupied more fully by men with long beards than by those without

Finally, General Lockhart appealed that some steps should be taken by the Government to show their appreciation or at least to stop their abuse of those British officers who were serving them V P Menon confirmed that the Government was going to issue a statement in this connection

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with Dr S P Mookerji, Minister for Industries and Supplies, on September 13, 1947

•••

2 Dr Mookerji was most interesting on the communal situation, since of course he is the leading light of the Hindu Mahasabha He told me that although he did not actually control the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh, the leaders loved him, trusted

him and would do whatever he said, and that he had begged them to call off all their activities and to participate in the rehabilitation of Delhi In fact it was the RSS which was going round burying the dead bodies. I congratulated him.

3 I asked him what line he was taking up about the Prime Minister's paper concerning the future transfer of populations. He told me he entirely agreed with the line I had taken up that morning at the Emergency Cabinet Committee meeting, in regard to the transfer of Muslims from Delhi, and said that he was prepared to back a policy whereby no Muslim should be forced to go to Pakistan against his will, and *vice versa*

However, he pointed out that Mr Jinnah's policy was to create a pan-Islamic state, and he did not want any Hindus or Sikhs in it The inevitable consequence of this would be a pan-Hindu-Sikh state, which would have no Muslims

I pointed out that unless vast additional areas of territory were given to Pakistan there could be no question of transferring the 45 million Muslims still left in the Dominion of India to Pakistan

Dr Mookerji then astounded me by saying that was entirely their lookout, they had brought this upon themselves and if the ultimate policy was to make the populations of the two dominions strictly communal, Mr Jinnah would have to take the 45 million and fit them into his existing area

I asked him how he reconciled this with his protestations that people should be allowed to choose for themselves, and he replied that he was in favour of adhering to this policy for as long as possible, but that a time might come when Mr Jinnah's behaviour would leave them no alternative but to insist on a clean sweep of the Muslims

He promised to keep me in touch with his views

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with Mr Gandhi, on September 14 and 16, 1947

I spoke to Mr Gandhi about the increasing tendency of responsible leaders and Ministers to become communal in outlook. He agreed that this was so

I told him that I thought that only the Prime Minister himself was completely free from the taint of communalism Maulana Azad, for a Muslim, was of course remarkably free of bias, though it must be remembered that he was in a peculiar situation I did not know whether Kidwai could be regarded as quite free, though he had shown no signs of communalism Matthai and Rajkumari still seemed fairly free, but Bhabha* was a disappointment since he had been selected specially as Chairman of the Delhi Emergency Committee not only for his business efficiency and strong personality, but because as a Parsee he should be non-communal I was informed, however, that in the last two days he had appeared to have gone completely communal.

I told Mr Gandhi that it was not a bit of good preaching to the people unless he had converted the leaders, and I urged him to devote his full energy towards keeping the leaders, and particularly the Deputy Prime Minister, as straight as possible

Mr Gandhi said he entirely agreed with every word I had spoken, that he already knew it, but that he was interested to see that I had summed up the position so correctly

He promised to do his very best, and offered never to mention my name in this matter or that we had had these conversations

He complained bitterly about the wording of Mr Jinnah's appeal for money, since it was apparently intended only to help Muslims wherever they might be and not the people of Pakistan

*C H Bhabha, Minister for Commerce in the Government of India

He asked me if I could take this up with Mr Jinnah personally, and I told him I did feel I should be right in doing this, but I would ask Lord Ismay to take it up the next time he visited Karachi.

Record of Governor-General's Interview with Major-General Pert on September 19, 1947

Major-General Pert said that the Sikhs, as a whole, were more arrogant than he had ever seen them In his view, Sikhistan had already been established He felt that the chance of the Sikhs disintegrating would be greater if they were left alone Any suggestion that they were going to be put down would only serve to solidify them

He said that he had seen near Rajpura in Patiala, on the Grand Trunk Road and near the Railway, three jathas of 70,80 and 100 fully-armed Sikhs ripe for trouble I said that I would suggest at the Emergency Committee Meeting the following day the possibility of extending to the States the Ordinances in force in East Punjab banning the gathering of more than five people.

I pointed out that the present Government of India had to a large extent to follow the will of the people At present, this will was anti-Muslim It would not turn to being anti-Sikh and the Government would not be able to order action against the Sikhs until the latter had turned on the Hindus.

Lord Ismay pointed out that some 20 per cent of the Indian army consisted of Sikhs General Rees gave his view that if the Government ordered any action against the Sikhs, all the Sikh soldiers would probably leave the army I suggested that a possible course might be that as the army was reduced, particularly to reduce the Sikh percentage and bring it more in line with the population percentage General Rees said that he doubted whether the Government of India was in a position politically or militarily to attempt to subjugate the Sikhs General Pert repeated

his belief that if no steps were taken against them there would be internal strife among the Sikhs They had, at present, no one leader whom they all would follow As a possible leader the names of the Maharaja of Patiala and of Sardar Baldev Singh were mentioned. General Rees said that Major Short had told him that the Sikhs had a much higher opinion of Baldev Singh than was generally realised

Lord Ismay suggested the possibility of a conference between Hindu, Muslim and Sikh leaders This would make the Sikhs again feel that they were one of the major communities—a feeling which they had lost since the issue of the Cabinet Mission Plan. It was pointed out that if such a conference took place, it would probably be necessary to have at least three representatives of each community, because of the difficulty of finding any one man to speak for the Sikhs as a whole

EMERGENCY COMMITTEE MEETINGS
First Meeting, September 6, 1947 (suite)

ITEM 4 THE IMPOSITION OF MARTIAL LAW

The Governor-General said that he considered that the imposition of martial law in the Punjab would be desirable, if the agreement of both Central Governments and both Provincial Governments could not agree, the alternative would be to introduce an ordinance going as far as possible towards martial law

Sir Rob Lockhart said that, if martial law was declared, he considered that he should not be Chief Administrator, instead he would wish to appoint a local Lieutenant-General with a Tactical Headquarters for this purpose, in charge of the East Punjab and Delhi areas

Mr Sundaram stated that there were two ways in which martial law was declared The first was when it had become impossible for the civil authorities to function He was not sure that this

could be said of the present circumstances By this, the civil authorities abandoned practically all power and an Indemnity Act had to be passed after the withdrawal of martial law validating all Acts promulgated during that period. In the second method, an ordinance would be issued declaring certain areas to be under martial law In this case, he believed that it would be possible to correlate the military and civil authorities He pointed out that under the existing Punjab Acts, officers had certain emergency powers

The Governor-General asked whether these emergency powers included the right to shoot members of rioting parties after their arrest? Similarly, did they include the right for the summary capital punishment of soldiers and police who did not do their duty? It was beyond doubt that at present military and police guards were in many cases not shooting to prevent massacres when trains in which they were travelling were attacked by members of their own communities There was only one way in which this could be stopped—it was brutal but the object was to save lives If a train was attacked successfully, the guards would be arrested, those who were wounded would be released, and the rest shot within half an hour Could that be done under any law but martial law?

The Deputy Prime Minister stated that under the present law a summary trial was necessary for those who were arrested However, the machinery for enforcing such summary trials had failed He was sure himself that the Pakistan Government would not be able to enforce the capital punishment of soldiers and police who did not do their duty

Sir Rob Lockhart said that he did not personally want martial law if the necessary results could be obtained in any other way; but he did want a means of rapid retribution

Mr Sundaram confirmed that under the present law those who had been arrested after committing atrocities had to be tried by civil courts.

Second Meeting, September 7, 1947

ITEM 1 THE SITUATION IN DELHI

The Governor-General stated that the situation in Delhi had worsened very considerably during the previous 24 hours There had been a large number of incidents, these included employees of his estate having been stabbed In his opinion, the trouble had grown through refugees arriving in such very large numbers before any refugee organisation was ready to receive them

The Banning of Firearms

The Governor-General suggested the possibility of issuing an ordinance making the carrying of any form of weapon illegal. This would be a temporary measure The question arose whether it should include the banning of the carrying of kirpans by Sikhs.

The Deputy Prime Minister said that any suggestion to ban kirpans would raise very great difficulties, as they had been recognised by the Government as religious weapons for many years The Punjab Government had never been able to introduce such a ban, Bombay and other places had failed also

Sardar Baldev Singh stated that there was no restriction on the carrying of kirpans even in West Punjab

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur stated that, although a certain number of casualties in the Delhi hospitals were suffering from bullet wounds, the majority were victims of stabs and slashes

The Governor-General said that, whereas religious tenets were obviously to be respected, if a general ban on the carrying of arms were ordered, it would be out of the question to make exceptions in the case of one community He asked whether it would be possible for the Sikhs to carry a very small emblem, sufficient to satisfy religious tenets Sir Rob Lockhart confirmed that kirpans had been strictly limited in size in 1922-3 He believed that in Calcutta the Sikhs had themselves agreed to limit

the size Another possibility was that kirpans should be sealed up to render them incapable of being drawn

The Governor-General stressed the world-wide effect that continued disturbances in Delhi, the capital city, would have Possibly kirpans could be kept in houses and not be taken out except to a specified area The question was, which decision would result in most people being killed—the banning of kirpans or the safeguarding of the Sikh religious feelings by letting them continue to carry them

The Governor-General asked Sardar Baldev Singh whether he could consult the religious leaders of the Sikh community in Delhi and ask them voluntarily to accept restrictions on the carrying of kirpans by Sikhs

The Prime Minister suggested that another step which might immediately be imposed would be an ordinance making it an offence for anybody to be seen in public with an unsheathed weapon, or with any weapon of the category of firearms, explosives and bombs

Seventh Meeting, September 11, 1947

ITEM 13 THE CARRIAGE OF WEAPONS IN DELHI

The Deputy Prime Minister stated that the Order banning the carriage of weapons in Delhi of any sort, including kirpans of whatever length, had caused much bitterness among the Sikhs He suggested the possibility of rescinding this Order and going back to the order which allowed Sikhs to carry kirpans of a length not more then 9″

Sardar Baldev Singh said that the issue of this order had made his own position extremely difficult He also made reference to a broadcast which had suggested that all stabbing in Delhi had been done by kirpans

The Prime Minister gave his view that the Order banning the

carriage of arms of any sort, including kirpans of any length, was at present essential He pointed out that this only applied to people going about in the open Even lathis were prohibited in public streets He considered that those who felt that they could not come out without their kirpans would have to remain at home, even at the expense of Government service He did not feel that this Order could at the present time, be relaxed in the slightest, watever the consequences.

Eleventh Meeting, September 15, 1947

ITEM 8 THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE

The Prime Minister said that he had met the Governor and the Prime Minister of the North West Frontier Province at Lahore the previous day They had informed him that there had been two major incidents in the Province in each of which some 250 Hindus and Sikhs had been killed The situation was completely in control, there was considerable tension and a further exciting event might lead to further incidents They had had very exaggerated reports of what was going on in Delhi They had informed him that there were approximately 45,000 Sikhs and Hindus left in the Province itself—one-third of this number was in Peshawar, one-third in Bannu, and one-third in refugee camps It was proposed that these last should be sent to Wagah and thence into India They hoped that the remainder would stay on

Lord Ismay said that he had received identical information about the North West Frontier Province from Mr Jinnah He had asked that the latter should send on reports from the NWFP to the Government of India, Mr Jinnah had replied that he believed that this was already being done

ITEM 9 SIND AND QUETTA

The Prime Minister said that Mr Liaquat Ali Khan had informed him that the situation in Sind was on the whole quiet and under control There was a certain amount of tension and needless panicking It was hoped and expected that the large majority of the Hindu population there would not move Stabbings in Karachi had not exceeded about a dozen There had been one big bomb explosion in the Headquarters of the RSS

So far as Quetta was concerned, a certain number of non-Muslim refugees had left for Hyderabad (Sind) Otherwise the situation was quiet

Thirteenth Meeting, September 18, 1947

ITEM 2. THE SITUATION IN THE PUNJAB

The Public Relations Officer reported that there was little change in the general situation and that large-scale evacuation was in progress Near Rawajpur the military opened fire on a mob estimated at 3-4,000 and beat them off, inflicting casualties The situation was reported to be deteriorating in Dujana, Ambala and Simla areas Refugee escorts beat off attacking mobs at Barnala and Kaithal

Major-General Rees stated that there were many rumours circulating on both sides of the border One, in particular, alleged that the Pakistan authorities were holding up a large column of Sikh refugees because they believed that the East Punjab authorities were doing the same to Muslim refugees He stated that there was some delay in the evacuation of Muslim refugees, owing to the water-logged nature of the country since the recent heavy rains, but it was untrue to say that the West Punjab authorities had delayed Sikh refugees, and they were, in fact, on the move

Seventeenth Meeting, September 26, 1947

ITEM 7 OUTSTANDING ITEMS

The Governor-General Officer said that he understood that the psychological situation in Delhi was worse that day than it had been for some time past There was very considerable tension again He suggested that this might be due to the propaganda which had been put out by the Government having "misfired". Perhaps it had not been on the correct lines.

Mr Patel said that the propaganda vans which had been going round with loud hailers had been nearly mobbed The line that was being taken by the speakers on these loud hailers was to the effect, "Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus be friends, Be one" a line of approach which did not appeal to anyone at the present time and annoyed the majority of people

The Prime Minister said that he fully agreed that this was by no means the right approach The average official, he pointed out, had little idea of crowd psychology He agreed to consider the possibility of nominating experts in this to assist the Delhi Emergency Committee

Mr Sanjevi said that the police were making an all-out effort to support the policy of the Government, but there was a definite feeling among the population that the return of Muslims from the city would cause trouble He suggested that the efforts of the police should be further assisted by speeches and appeals from public men He added that on September 22 and 24 the chief Commissioner and the Deputy Inspector-General of Police had made a successful visit to Muslim localities

The Deputy Prime Minister said that a total of 2,443 persons had been arrested in Delhi recently, and 1,333 special constables had been enrolled The majority of those arrested had been curfew breakers and looters

The Prime Minister said that it appeared to him that none of

the more important organisers of the recent trouble had been arrested Mr Sanjevi said that he wondered whether it had been an organised effort when the disturbances broke out The Prime Minister replied that he did not wonder about this at all—he was sure The disturbances had been organised, taking advantage of the psychological state of affairs People who were normally considered responsible, rather than the goonda type, had taken a large part in the organising A number of notices and leaflets had been circulated in Delhi about a week before the disturbances broke out This had been done by some organisation So far, the problem had been tackled in a superficial way We trusted that some of the organisers would soon be unearthed and arrested. Such action would improve the situation both materially and psychologically

Mr Sanjevi said that the police had information of certain people who were likely to make trouble again These were being rounded up.

Nineteenth Meeting, September 30, 1947

ITEM 2 THE SITUATION IN DELHI

The Minister of Health gave details of an attack on the Safdarjung Hospital, which had occurred the previous night, and in which a number of Muslim patients had been killed Mr Sanjevi also reported on this incident He said that the Police Guard on the hospital, which consisted of one Sub-Inspector, three Head Constables, and sixteen men, had been armed only with lathis and not with rifles This was in direct contravention of definite orders which had been given to the Superintendent of Police The Sub-Inspector in command of this Guard had not fired his revolver, and had no explanation to offer for this Mr Sanjevi gave his view that the Police Guard had failed in its duty He said that he was going to take serious action against

those concerned The band which attacked the hospital came from three villages in the locality The members of this band must have known how the patients were distributed among the wards, as they had attacked only that ward which contained Muslims, and not approached the others in which there were Hindu patients

The Governor-General said that he considered that this incident represented a serious set-back on the steady improvement which had been apparent of late in the situation in Delhi It was no use trying to conceal the incident, full publicity should be given to the measures which had been taken against those who had failed in their duty The Prime Minister emphasised that in this publicity attention should be drawn to the fact that the attackers had come from neighbouring villages, the city of Delhi should not be drawn into the picture

Mr Sanjevi undertook to have a collective fine imposed that day on the villages from which the attackers had come

The Prime Minister recalled that, at its meeting on September 26, the Committee had charged him to consider how the right psychological approach should be introduced in appeals and addresses to the people of Delhi He said that he had come to the conclusion that it would be best for him to give a number of such addresses himself He had held meetings daily, and believed that these had done a lot of good At his meeting at Hauz Kazi the previous day, there had been some 20,000 people, including Muslims He gathered that the effect had been most successful His general impression was that in Delhi there was definite veering round of popular opinion in favour of peace and in condemnation of recent events There was still, though, a strong "core" of individuals and groups fighting against this improvement and wanting to create trouble so as to prevent the return of the atmosphere of peace There was a general improvement in the behaviour of the refugees, the average refugee was not bent on mischief, but here again there were "cells" which

incited the people to mischief The number of these inciters was relatively limited—perhaps up to 500 There were only two approaches now—first, to change the atmosphere in the city by continued addresses, and secondly, police and military action to deal with this "hard core" of those who were still inciting trouble.

Mr Sanjevi reported that looters had been arrested in two places the previous day. One looter had been shot dead He had reiterated the orders that looters were to be fired on The Police now had specific information in regard to the gangs that were operating and the CID was rounding up a number of people The "round-up" situation was, in fact, improving fast

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur suggested the possibility of a freer use of the collective fine system in Delhi The Prime Minister said that he was sure that this would make a difference —but probably not on the "hard core" to which he had referred In general fines should be imposed where much damage and killing had taken place—especially in cases in which places of worship had been desecrated

Mr Sanjevi said that he had passed information a week previously to the District Magistrate that he should start imposing collective fines in specific localities Mr Patel confirmed that orders on this matter had been issued and that action was being taken He added that the District Magistrate had asked him whether sentences of whipping should be imposed, and he had replied that this was not the Government's policy at present

Twenty-Second Meeting, October 10, 1947

ITEM 2 REPORT BY THE GOVERNOR OF EAST PUNJAB

•••

Situation in Jullundur Division

Sir Chandulal Trivedi said that for the first time he considered

that the corner had definitely been turned as regards the situation in the Jullundur Division of East Punjab. The visit paid to Amritsar by the Deputy Prime Minister had had very great effect indeed. This was confirmed by Lady Mountbatten who said that she had heard reports of the great good which this visit had done on all sides during her recent visit.

Sir Chandulal Trivedi went on to say that the ordinary administrative machinery had begun to start functioning again in the Jullundur Division. Collective fines had been imposed in connection with attacks on railway trains the previous month. A systematic drive for the recovery of looted property had also been started. This included a search of the houses of police officers. From one sub-inspector's house 2½ lakhs worth of looted property had been recovered.

Situation in the Ambala Division

Sir Chandulal Trivedi said that he was not so happy about the general situation in the Ambala District consisting mainly of attacks by armed bands of Sikhs on Muslim refugee columns and camps These had increased over the last few days. When his Ministers had been in Delhi, he had sent them a message asking that one of them should visit Ambala and try to induce the Sikhs to stop these attacks. The problem was one of the early evacuation of Muslims, of whom one million remained in the Ambala Division—which, of course, included the Districts of Ambala, Hissar, Rohtak, Karnal and Gurgaon. The Muslims were getting very restive. They were in the main concentrated in various villages and towns; there was raiding and counter-raiding going on and a general insecurity in the areas around these concentrations. Marching columns of Muslim refugees with escorts had already started.

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with Rajkumari Amrit Kaur on January 10, 1948

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur came in unannounced having come straight from Gandhiji with the request that I should at once telephone to Mr Jinnah and ask him to do everything in his power to stop the massacres in Karachi, to rescind the order preventing refugees moving from Karachi to Bombay by steamer, and to give the latest news of the position.

I told her I regretted it was valueless my ringing up Mr Jinnah as, since our last meeting in Lahore, he had taken a violent dislike to me, and had gone so far as to make a number of accusations against me to the BBC correspondent, Robert Stimson, but that I felt sure we could find out the necessary information from Mr Liaquat Ali at the Lahore meeting the following morning, and I could also ask the British High Commissioner whether he had any news from his colleague in Karachi.

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur told me that she attributed the troubles in Karachi, at all events the looting, to the intense indignation caused in Pakistan by the refusal of India to hand over their 55 crores. I told her that I considered this action to have been unwise, unstatesmanlike, and the only dishonourable thing the Government of India had done in my knowledge. She asked me to use my influence to get the Government to rescind their order, and I told her I had already spoken so strongly that there was nothing more left that I could say, and it was not a matter of such importance that I could resign over it.

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan at Lahore, on January 11, 1948

This was a very friendly, off-the-record discussion

Mr Liaquat Ali Khan, who has lost 2½ stone by his new diet of bananas and skimmed milk, was quite sylph-like and rejuvenated and in very good form.

Pandit Nehru responded to the atmosphere and all discussions were held in an unusually friendly manner

I asked Mr Liaquat Ali to give us an account of what had occurred in Karachi on the 3rd, and he gave a full and candid account which tallied with what we had heard Pandit Nehru asked whether it was true that the Government of Sind had issued orders which precluded the departure of Hindu refugees by boat to Bombay Mr Liaquat Ali said that their only anxiety was to prevent a large influx of Muslim refugees who could not be accommodated in Karachi and that so far as he knew the order merely forbade more steamers than normally plied being put on the run

Pandit Nehru pointed out that so long as all the passengers paid for their tickets both ways, they did not come under the general classification of refugees since they must have enough money to be able to buy such tickets So long as the steamers plying were doing so on an economic basis and not government sponsored, he did not see why even an additional steamer should not be requisitioned

B THE REFUGEES PROBLEM

EMERGENCY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Third Meeting, September 7, 1947

APPENDIX "A"
DRAFT ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING EVACUATION
(To be Agreed with the Government of Pakistan)

The situation in the Punjab has developed in such a way that mass movement of Muslims from East Punjab and of non-Muslims from West Punjab has become inevitable

The Governments of India and of Pakistan have therefore decided that the movement of these people from East to West Punjab and *vice versa* is to have first priority They have agreed to co-operate with each other on this matter to the fullest extent and to take all steps to ensure that the movements in both directions are completed with the greatest possible speed and with the fullest measure of security

Both Governments appeal for the co-operation of every member of the public in this matter Violence begets violence and it cannot be too strongly emphasised that any interference with the movement in either direction will inevitably delay and imperil the movement in the opposite direction Consequently, any persons who may attempt such interference will, in effect, grievously injure their own people.

The Governments of India and Pakistan are resolved to use all available resources to expedite and secure the safety of these movements, and they have armed themselves with the most drastic powers to ensure that wrongdoers are summarily dealt with in the severest manner

Sixth Meeting, September 10, 1947

ITEM 12 THE RELATIVE PRIORITY OF EVACUATION OF REFUGEES AND THE MAINTENANCE OF LAW AND ORDER

Major-General Chimni said that he had been appointed head of the Military Evacuation Organisation in East Punjab on August 29 He had set up his Headquarters in Amritsar with a forward link at Lahore A number of convoys had been running, using civilian transport He has collected information in various ways of the conditions in West Punjab and this information was most disturbing He was clear that the evacuation of refugees was by no means the only commitment at the present time He pointed out that there was never a military situation in which there were sufficient resources to meet every contingency—the relative importance of the several tasks had to be considered In this particular case, he had no desire to minimise the importance of internal security, but he considered that the very existence of the large majority of non-Muslim inhabitants of West Punjab was now in danger and felt that internal security should take a secondary place to evacuation, and that risks in the sphere of internal security should be accepted The harrowing tales which he had heard about West Punjab had brought him to the conclusion that it was imperative that the refugees there should be evacuated within three or four weeks Otherwise there might be none to bring Whatever the intentions of the Pakistan Government itself, there was no doubt that the lower grades of officials were not obeying their orders He dreaded to think of the political repercussions that a wholesale massacre would have

Major-General Chimni went on to say that he had suggested that the resources required to improve the rate of evacuation of refugees could be obtained from certain sources, but Lieut.-

General Bucher had informed him that many of these were already tapped He had in mind particularly 123 Brigade who had recently arrived in East Punjab. Many of the troops in East Punjab were employed in collecting Muslim refugees from small pockets to large camps There were not sufficient Pakistan troops for this purpose He required altogether two Brigades He had so far been given a battalion, less a Company and a Platoon, and one more Battalion was due to be put at his disposal that day

Major-General Chimni also suggested that there should be but one Commander to deal with questions of internal security and of evacuation. He gave his view that most of the refugees in East Punjab would have to come out on foot. To protect this movement, armoured car patrols would be most useful He suggested that more civilian transport should be requisitioned and formed into Companies on a military basis He has also asked for a workshop element which might be provided by the Armoured Division

Lieut-General Bucher said that he personally agreed with the general ideas put forward by Major-General Chimni Acceptance of these ideas was, however, a matter for the Government He also agreed that one over-all Commander for both evacuation and internal security should be appointed He explained that all Units which could be spared from Eastern Command had already been ordered up Lieut-General Tucker had said that he would send no more unless he was ordered to do so Southern Command would be able to provide some more Units. He pointed out that it was impolitic to take away the transport of units employed on internal security Decreased mobility required further forces.

The Governor-General gave his opinion that no reinforcements should be sent to East Punjab at the expense of Delhi In his view, Delhi should remain the over-riding first priority

The Prime Minister said that he agreed that Delhi should

continue to have first priority It seemed to him that the questions of evacuation of refugees and the maintenance of law and order were closely inter-related To relax on law and order might well increase the refugee problem—new districts might be affected In his view, however, so far as East Punjab was concerned, the evacuation problem should have priority The extent to which this was done would be a matter for those on the spot. He emphasised that it had been agreed at a meeting at Lahore that evacuation should be arranged on a mutual basis He emphasised the necessity for tackling the problem with this in mind Apart from this undertaking, the presence of Muslims waiting to be evacuated in East Punjab—for example 200,000 in Jullundur—was a constant irritant Each factor reacted upon the other It came down to a requirement of further troops The Prime Minister also agreed that the separate military evacuation organisation should be abolished and that one Commander should be appointed to deal with problems of both law and order and evacuation

Eighth Meeting, September 12, 1947

ITEM 3 REFUGEES IN DELHI

Lord Ismay handed round a note on refugee camps in Delhi, which he had prepared as a result of visits paid by him to these camps the previous day

The Governor-General emphasised the particular necessity for appointing Camp Commandants and staff in these camps; and for providing loudspeaker equipment It would also be necessary to make a census of everybody in the camps, as families were in many cases divided and in different places Concerning the reports of people having difficulty in entering the Purana Qila camp, he suggested that this difficulty would be overcome by a proper approach Lady Mountbatten would,

he was sure, offer to go down with representatives of the United Relief and Welfare Council to arrange this The Governor-General pointed out that a large number of the inhabitants of the Purana Qila camp were Pakistan Government employees On their treatment would largely depend the reports of events in Delhi which were taken back to Pakistan.

Sir Rob Lockhart said that he had visited the camps with Lord Ismay the previous day He has found that many people there were anxious to help, and a general desire that the Government of India should take over the running of the camps The guard on the Purana Qila camp was only 25 men He personally had seen no signs of hostility amongst the inmates He emphasised that a very large staff would be required to make the camps run properly He went on to say that many people of all types had been ordered to go to these camps, and instanced the case of a major in the Pakistan army on his way to Quetta who, on arrival at Delhi, had been told to go to the Purana Qila camp

Mr Neogy said that he had spoken to the Pakistan High Commissioner the previous day about the Purana Qila camp being taken over by the Government of India The Pakistan High Commissioner was in agreement with this proposal—in fact keen on it—on the condition that a Muslim guard was retained.

Dr Matthai stated that 14,500 people had already left Delhi for Pakistan in special trains He hoped to be able to provide two trains on the following day for those in the Purana Qila camp, provided that guards were available After discussion it was agreed that these trains, so that they could travel throughout the journey from Delhi to Lahore in daylight, should not leave until dawn on Sunday, September 14.

The Governor-General suggested that those in the Purana Qila camps should be segregated into two lots—those who wished to leave for Pakistan and those who wanted to stay on in Delhi The latter could then be brought out and either sent to their

homes if they wished to go, or accommodated together in some place of safety In this connection Mr Bhabha mentioned that not one-tenth of the Sher Shah Mess was yet occupied.

Ninth Meeting, September 13, 1947

ITEM 4 EVACUATION OF REFUGEES FROM EAST PUNJAB

The Meeting considered two telegrams which General Messervy had sent to General Lockhart, and a telegram sent by the Governor of West Punjab to the Governor-General of Pakistan, with a copy to the Governor-General of India

This last telegram contained the following sentence· 'Tara Singh finished discussion by saying "This is war" ' Major-General Rees stated that he had rung up the Governor of West Punjab and Major-General Thimayya in order to clarify the telegrams received and this sentence in particular The report of Master Tara Singh's remark had been made by Major-General Thimayya to Major-General Gain, and by the latter to Sir Francis Mudie Major-General Thimayya had asked Master Tara Singh to undertake that the Sikhs would not attack a column of Muslim refugees due to go through Amritsar from Jullundur to Lahore. Master Tara Singh had not been able to give this guarantee, as Amritsar city, through which the road ran, was full of Sikh refugees from West Punjab in ugly temper. Major-General Thimayya had accordingly arranged to bulldoze a road round Amritsar city and to impose a curfew there. The conversation between Major-General Thimayya and Master Tara Singh had finished on a more general note, discussing how the present situation would end Major-General Thimayya had understood Master Tara Singh to say that the only real solution appeared to be war Therefore the telegram from Sir Francis Mudie, who had received a report of this conversation second-

hand, definitely created a false impression

Major-General Rees said that he understood the Governments of East and West Punjab both to desire to ensure safety for refugees on the move on foot He himself had pointed out to representatives of both Governments that the three essentials were first, to provide adequate escorts, secondly, to induce the right atmosphere among the local population, and thirdly, for the Governments themselves to be aware of the situation and to decide whether each move was justified by the risks involved Major-General Rees pointed out that most of the biggest incidents had taken place in connection with marching columns of refugees He explained that the road was going to be allotted to either side for three or four days in turn The first move under this scheme, which had been worked out by Major-General Chimni, was that of the Muslim refugees from Jullundur through Amritsar to Lahore Both Major-Generals Thimayya and Chimni were hopeful that these moves would be successful. Major-General Rees stated that the Sikhs and Hindus had decided to postpone their departure from West Punjab He pointed out that the responsibility for guarding them was that of the West Punjab Government, which he understood to be confident that there would be no major incident

The Governor-General asked whether it was fair to say that, on both sides, the Muslims and Hindus were comparatively well controlled by their respective Governments, and that Master Tara Singh had not got the same degree of control over the Sikh jathas The Prime Minister pointed out that there were jathas and bands of all three communities in both Provinces which were not under the control of any Government

In connection with the two telegrams received by General Lockhart from General Messervy, it was pointed out that the word "Sikhs" was being used loosely, instead of the word "non-Muslims" The Prime Minister also queried General Messervy's statement that there were many more Muslim refugees to bring

to West Punjab than non-Muslims to move to East Punjab He asked on what data this statement could be based The Governor-General suggested that the award of the Boundary Commission had resulted in more Muslims being left in East Punjab than non-Muslims in West Punjab The Prime Minister also queried General Messervy's statement that the movement of refugees from West to East was organised and unmolested He pointed out that many incidents in the course of this movement had been reported Sir Rob Lockhart suggested that there had probably been more non-Muslim soldiers when the movement had started, available for protection duties in West Punjab than vice versa

The Governor-General emphasised the desirability of asking Master Tara Singh to come to Delhi for discussions at an early date

Eleventh Meeting, September 15, 1947

ITEM 4 OUTSTANDING ITEMS (E C P 10)

•••

Mr Bhabha drew attention to the fact that many of the inmates of the refugee camps were not real refugees at all. He pointed out there was always a large floating population in Delhi, many of the people comprising this had taken advantage of the present situation to enter the camps, and were increasing the disorder there

On the question of supplying military personnel to help run refugee camps, Sir Rob Lockhart said that it would be possible to provide half the battalion of the Mahar Regiment, which had been brought as reinforcements to Delhi Another possibility would be for the Headquarters of the Armoured Division to be put in charge of organising the two main Muslim refugee camps under Mr Bhabha He pointed out, however, that further calls on the Indian army in this respect would react on and delay

the operations to clear the city

The Governor-General said that it had been suggested that some of the British troops, at present stationed in Delhi Cantonment, should offer their services as volunteers to help in the running of the camps of both communities during their spare time It should be made quite clear that these British troops would not be used for escort or military duties of any kind They would not take their weapons with them. The Prime Minister said that he agreed that this offer should be accepted Sir Rob Lockhart pointed out that the British soldiers, so employed, would require interpreters, but it was not considered that there would be any difficulty in the supply of these from amongst the refugees themselves

•••

Sir Rob Lockhart suggested that the appeal for volunteers to put their vehicles at the disposal of the Delhi Emergency Committee should include not only jeeps and lorries, but vehicles of all kinds Dr Matthai stated that the orders which had been issued invalidating basic petrol coupons, applied only to jeeps and goods vehicles

•••

Mr Bhabha stated that the two refugee trains carrying persons (particularly Pakistan Government employees) from the Purana Qila camp, had left at 1 20 p m and 1.55 p m the previous day These trains had carried 2,000 and 2,500 persons, respectively There had been some empty carriages, but this had been unavoidable. Mr Patel confirmed that this had not been because the refugees concerned had been unwilling to go, rather, time had been too short to bring sufficient number along He also stated that most of the food which had been arranged for these trains had never arrived, although it had been despatched by the non-official organisation responsible. It had probably been delivered to the Purana Qila camp

ITEM 6. THE PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO LAHORE

The Prime Minister said that he had visited Lahore the previous day There he had held long discussions with the Prime Minister of Pakistan on various matters They had investigated certain complaints which had been made by both the West Punjab and the East Punjab Governments These complaints had been strikingly similar He had discussed the telegram from Sir Francis Mudie which had quoted Master Tara Singh as saying, "This is war", it had become obvious that this quotation was based on a misconception of what Master Tara Singh had, in fact, said

The Prime Minister stated that two convoys of refugees on foot had already started These stretched for as much as 40 miles, he had flown over one of them on his way back. There were perhaps 100,000 people in this convoy. The one (of Muslims) which was to have marched from Jullundur to Lahore via Amritsar had been held up because of the difficulty of passing through Amritsar where there were 70,000 refugees from West Punjab in an excited state and where the atmosphere was not wholesome The process of bull-dozing a road round Amritsar would take a week The representatives of the West Punjab Government had considered that this would involve too long a delay, because the refugees from that province would meet trouble if it was learnt that those from East Punjab had been delayed If this report went around, the police escort of the convoy from West Punjab would, it was felt, prove inadequate The possibility of sending the East Punjab by a canal road was being investigated—the difficulty about this was that the two convoys might meet After considerable discussion, it had been left to Major-Generals Cariappa and Chimni to make the best possible arrangements, and it was hoped that the convoy from Jullundur would start that day or the following day

The Prime Minister said that the question of searching

refugees had also arisen There had been complaints concerning these searches from both sides. Some convoys had been stopped for twelve hours and the people harassed and robbed The meeting at Lahore had come to the unanimous conclusion that it was not worth while continuing these searches—apart from the inconvenience caused, they were corrupting the military and the police Therefore, it had been decided to issue an announcement The Prime Minister explained that this statement applied to the two Punjab Provinces only It did not exclude the unlicenced weapons, if these were carried openly, nor did it exclude searches in permanent camps

•••

The Prime Minister went on to say that another matter which had been discussed at Lahore was the vast number of women who had been abducted and how these could be restored to their families According to his own information, there had been a fairly large number of abductions in East Punjab, but a very much larger number in West Punjab Some women had already returned He had suggested that this was largely a question for the military and the police, but that women helpers might be associated in their efforts He had offered to accept in East Punjab any such women helpers nominated by the Pakistan Government The main duty of such helpers would be to introduce the human element.

Twelfth Meeting, September 16, 1947

ITEM 6. REFUGEES IN DELHI

Dr Zakir Hussain made a statement on the refugee camp in Delhi, at the Prime Minister's invitation He suggested that these places could not properly be called camps, but rather areas in which humanity was dumped Disease was breaking out The suggestion that he wished most to emphasise was that the present

influx of refugees into the camps must be stopped There were some 50,000 already in the Purana Qila 16,000 had been moved from the Ridge to Humayun's Tomb, but 10,000 more had turned up there The previous day (and that morning) there had been a stream of Muslims to the Purana Qila without escort He could see no reason why these people should have moved There had been no incidents in some of the predominantly Muslim areas of Delhi City to impel their movement They were evidently being advised to move by officials He suggested that they should repeatedly be told not to move In this matter speed was essential He further suggested that uniforms should be provided for volunteers from among the refugees themselves to help organise the camps The Committee

(iii) directed the Delhi Emergency Committee to investigate the possibility of providing uniforms for volunteers among the refugees in camps, to help run the camps

Mr Bhabha said that he agreed that there had been confusion in the refugee camps, but was sure that Dr Zakir Hussain would appreciate that the Administration had been taken by surprise by a vast mass movement He pointed out that the Purana Qila had been run by the Pakistan High Commissioner until two days previously He suggested that all that was possible was in fact being done One of the main difficulties was that many of the refugees did not obey the Camp Commandants or their own leaders It should be appreciated that until the people started to help themselves, it would not be possible to get a satisfactory organisation running

Dr Zakir Hussain said that he fully agreed that much had been done for the refugee camps, his above remarks had not been intended to imply criticism.

On the suggestion that the Headquarters of the Armoured Division should be placed at the disposal of the Delhi Emergency Committee to help organise the camps, Mr Bhabha stated

that he did not consider that this would be necessary at present, particularly in view of the fact that British troops were being made available to help on a voluntary basis

It was pointed out that these British troops would not, as had been recorded the previous day, go without arms, but they would not use their arms nor be employed on escort duties It was further pointed out that the employment of British troops was not limited to the camps at Humayun's Tomb and Kingsway

The Prime Minister pointed out that if the mass migration of Muslims from their homes to refugee camps continued, the whole organisation would collapse Furthermore, protection and feeding of these people in their own homes ought to be easier than in camps The question facing the Government was whether the migration should be approved of or not The alternative to taking measures to stop the migration was mass evacuation

The Deputy Prime Minister suggested that it was probably agreed by all that those refugees who wished to leave Delhi, should be enabled to do so It would be best to sort out those who wanted to go and to remove them as soon as possible As for those who desired to stay, they should be advised to go back to their homes The Government could surely not, however, take responsibility for telling people to stay, guaranteeing them protection if they did

Major-General Cariappa related incidents in which, as a result of prompt military action, thousands more of the Muslim inhabitants of Delhi had been stopped from going to Purana Qila From his personal experience, he was led to believe that a very large number of those who had gone to the camps would return to their homes if some measures to ensure their security were taken In this connection he considered that propaganda work by the leaders would be most useful

The Governor-General pointed out that the loud hailers, being produced by Rear Admiral Hall, would be most useful as a means of enabling leaders to address large masses of people.

The Governor-General said that the Muslim police at Government House had all left the previous day, in the belief that they had been offered safe transport to Pakistan and immediate employment when they arrived there It was pointed out that these men must have been under a misapprehension, as the Pakistan Government had already declared its inability to employ more police

Mr Sanjevi said that he had explained this position clearly to the Muslim police in Delhi, and had done his best to assure them that they would be safe if they remained However, 75 per cent had deserted, and the balance were likely to leave that day or the following day A total of 1,600 men were involved The Governor-General suggested that, when the Cabinet considered the problem of the future of the Muslim refugees in Delhi, they should also bear in mind the question of whether or not the Muslim police were to be re-employed He also emphasised that, before measures were taken to induce those people at present in camps to return to their homes, arrangements for visible security and, if possible, for the provision of food in the areas to which they were to be returned, should be made

Thirteenth Meeting, September 18, 1947

"NON-DELHI" ITEMS

•••

The Prime Minister stated that there were 250,000 Hindu and Sikh refugees in the Western United Provinces More than half of these had arrived over the last fortnight It was for consideration whether some of them could be moved to East Punjab Sir Chandulal Trivedi pointed out that, since August 15, East Punjab had received more than a million refugees from West Punjab. Another two million might be coming He did not consider that East Punjab would be able to absorb more than the number The

Prime Minister pointed out that at least an equivalent number of Muslim refugees would have left or be leaving East Punjab. Sir Chandulal Trivedi said that there were one million Muslims in Ambala Division, the movement of whom had not yet started. The total Muslim population in East Punjab was four million. There was a difference of one lakh between that and the total non-Muslim population of West Punjab Moreover, refugees from the North-West Frontier Province had come to East Punjab Whereas he agreed that any further movement into the United Provinces should be stopped, he said that he would much prefer to leave those who were already in the United Provinces there, until East Punjab had a chance of clearing up their own mess

On Serial 180, Sardar Swaran Singh said that two train-loads of Muslim refugees a day were moving from Simla In view of a telegram which the Prime Minister had received from Mr Liaquat Ali Khan, he undertook to arrange that any employees of the Pakistan Government, who might be in Simla, should get priority in evacuation

On serial 181, Rear Admiral Hall stated that he had been informed that there was already a most efficient merchant vessel service, organised by shipping lines, for the evacuation of non-Muslims from Karachi to Kathiawar and Bombay If berths were to be found in Karachi for the naval sloops, which it had been suggested should be used for this evacuation, it would mean delaying the commercial vessels

Mr Bhabha said that the Ministry of Commerce had made arrangements for the merchant ships to be used He had received a telegram, the previous day, from Mr Chundrigar (Commerce Minister, Pakistan) saying that he would not give clearance for these ships to go to Kathiawar ports, and could only allow them to be half loaded in view of Customs examination difficulties

Sir Rob Lockhart mentioned that he had received a telegram the previous day from the C in C Southern Army, to the effect

that the arrival of refugees in Bombay was creating tension there.

ITEM 5 THE REPORT BY THE GOVERNOR OF EAST PUNJAB

Sir Chandulal Trivedi said that he had (in accordance with the decisions of the Joint Defence Council meeting held at Lahore on August 29) issued ordinances for the setting-up of concentration camps and making illegal congregations of more than five persons

The Committee

(v) invited the Prime Minister to find out from the Prime Minister of Pakistan whether the West Punjab Government had issued similar ordinances

Sir Chandulal Trivedi said that he understood that Headquarters, East Punjab Area was due to move to Jullundur in about ten days' time Major-General Cariappa explained that the delay in this move had been due to the necessity for making adequate signal arrangements

Sir Chandulal Trivedi recalled that he had been asked to consider the re-arming of the Muslim Police in Ambala District As most of these had now opted to go to West Punjab, he considered that such a step would be inadvisable

Sir Chandulal Trivedi said that he considered that Major-General Chimni's organisation and the resources at his disposal were still unsatisfactory Three military transport companies had been due to arrive, but had not done so The military had only provided 60 vehicles in all. He himself had made arrangements for the provision of 360 civilian vehicles

Sir Rob Lockhart said that one of these companies had been diverted to Delhi, but he understood that the other two had been sent to East Punjab

The Committee:

(vi) directed the C in C, Indian army, to find out what had happened to the two motor transport companies which had been sent to East Punjab, but which had apparently not arrived there

Sir Chandulal Trivedi emphasised that he still wanted more troops—particularly in the Ambala sub-area and in Hissar and Rohtak Sir Rob Lockhart said that all possible reinforcements were being brought from the rest of India to Delhi and East Punjab He undertook to inform Sir Chandulal Trivedi what units would be sent to East Punjab

Sir Chandulal Trivedi went on to say that he understood that only one or two sections of each battalion at present in the East Punjab Area were available for the maintenance of law and order Over 90 per cent of the soldiers were engaged in guarding Muslim refugee camps and escorting Muslim refugee convoys He recalled that the Joint Defence Council had, on August 29, decided that Muslim refugee camps in East Punjab should be guarded by troops of the Pakistan army He considered that the Pakistan army were not providing their proper quota of escorts

Sir Rob Lockhart said that it had been agreed that it would be impracticable for all Muslim refugees in East Punjab to be guarded by troops of the Pakistan army, each case was to be taken on its merits It had also been laid down by the Emergency Committee that the first priority in East Punjab was to be movement of evacuees, even at the expense of law and order.

Major-General Cariappa said that he had been personally assured by Lieutenant-General Gracey that all the non Muslim convoys leaving West Punjab were adequately protected He went on to point out that the number of companies sent by either Dominion to guard their refugees in the other was equal.

The Prime Minister said that he understood that one convoy of 100,000 non-Muslim refugees was protected by only 40 policemen He also drew attention to a telegram from Major-General Chimni saying that a convoy of four lakhs of non-

Muslim refugees was in a very vulnerable position and asking for two further Infantry Battalions and an Armoured Corps Regiment

Sir Rob Lockhart stated that Lieutenant-General Russel was going to Lahore to see Major-Generals Thimayya and Chimni He suggested the possibility of Major-General Chimni now being relieved to take up his regular appointment as Major-General, Administration, Eastern Command, and a Brigadier, who would be junior in every way to Major-General Thimayya, being brought in his place

Sir Chandulal Trivedi pointed out that the East Punjab Government was bearing the extra strain of having to evacuate and protect Muslim refugees coming from the Punjab States

The Committee

(*vii*) directed the Ministry of States to convene a conference of representatives of the Punjab States and the East Punjab Government to consider the resettlement of non-Muslim refugees in those States

Mr Desai said that the Government of Bikaner had drawn attention to the fact that there were 50,000 Muslim refugees wanting to pass through Bikaner on the way to Bahawalpur Their way would lead through an area in which there was a very large number of Hindu and Sikh refugees, and this was very liable to lead to trouble The Governor-General asked Sir Chandulal Trivedi to bear in mind the possibility that these Muslim refugees might have to move through East Punjab.

Sardar Baldev Singh said that he intended to send to the Government of East Punjab within the next few days has proposals on the raising of Home Guards of a semi-military character in East Punjab

Fifteenth Meeting, September 22, 1947

ITEM 6 THE RE-SETTLEMENT OF REFUGEES IN EAST PUNJAB

The Governor-General said that with members of the Committee he had flown over East and West Punjab the previous day and seen columns of refugees from the air There was one column of non-Muslims some 50 miles long, about to cross the River Ravi at Belloki Head This column was trekking in an orderly fashion and most of the refugees appeared to have their bullock-carts and flocks with them Their movement was obviously well organised, and compared very favourably with that of the Muslim columns going westward Some of the latter had been seen between Jullundur and Amritsar and seemed to consist mainly of people on foot with such belongings as they could carry themselves

The Governor-General pointed out that at the present time the Government was almost completely occupied in the immediate problem of getting the refugees from one Dominion to the other in safety The next problem that would arise would be to set up some organisation for their reception, rehabilitation and re-settlement—a task the magnitude of which was immense However, the Government of India had the advantage that the refugees coming to India were moving in an orderly way In two or three days' time the head of this column would enter East Punjab territory The Central Government would have a great responsibility for these people because an all-India problem was involved In his opinion other Provinces should be invited to second officers to East Punjab to help in its solution He considered also that Mr Neogy, accompanied by members of his staff and representatives of the Health and Food Ministries, should fly down to East Punjab to find out what steps the Provincial Government intended to take in the matter and what assistance

they desired It could then be further discussed on the Governor's next visit to Delhi

The Governor-General said that in his opinion this problem of re-settlement could be said to be divisible into three phases

(*a*) the steps which would have to be taken immediately the refugees arrived, to receive them and to direct them to their various destinations,

(*b*) the organisation which would have to be set up to continue to assist these refugees for the initial period after their arrival—a period of, perhaps, some six months, and

(*c*) the formulating of a long-term re-settlement plan

Mr Neogy said that he had already made arrangements to visit East Punjab on September 24 The long-term aspect of re-settlement had not escaped notice—an eminent economist had been appointed as Economic Adviser in this connection A committee, composed of scientists and others, would be associated with his work

The Prime Minister gave his view that the long-term re-settlement plan would be intimately associated with other economic planning that it was intended to carry out Wider schemes would also soon have to be considered There were a large number of middle-class refugees who had no wish to settle on the land A deputation of these had made the suggestion to him that they might build a model town of their own, where they would become a self-sufficing community, near Delhi So far as the immediate re-settlement of non-Muslim refugees entering East Punjab from West Punjab was concerned, 50,000 had already been settled in The process would be partly automatic and partly assisted. The number of people leaving East Punjab was, on the whole, larger than the number coming in There should, therefore, be sufficient land available for them

Dr Matthai gave his opinion that the first two stages of re-settlement were far more important and should be concentrated on first. He also made reference to the importance of quick

action to harvest the next crop

Lady Mountbatten gave her view that there might be a large number of people among the refugees who had suffered such privations that they would not be able to do much to help themselves in the initial stages.

Finally, the Governor-General suggested that any announcement on this subject should make clear the right of the Government, whatever the interim allocation of land, to arrange for collective farming schemes at a later date

Sixteenth Meeting, September 24, 1947

ITEM 5 REFUGEE POLICY

The Minister of Finance drew attention to the necessity for formulating a definite policy in connection with the refugees in Delhi. He pointed out that, before it would be possible to induce any Muslim refugees who had lived in Delhi to return to their homes, it was necessary first to create suitable conditions in the city He said that from information available to him the Muslim and non-Muslim inhabitants of Delhi were still friendly towards one another, almost all the trouble had been originated by refugees who had arrived from outside Delhi He suggested, therefore, that the highest priority should be given to sending these away The slightest disturbance in Delhi had very serious moral reactions on the rest of India In his view a decision should be taken that in no circumstances should Delhi continue to be a centre for refugee camps He understood that there were some 10,000 non-Muslim refugees who had come from outside Delhi and were living in refugee camps, and perhaps a lakh and a half more who were living with their relations He suggested that use could be made of the ration card system to force these people out After a certain date no temporary or permanent ration cards would be allowed to those who were not proper inhabi-

tants of Delhi This sounded harsh but was, he considered, in the interest of the community as a whole

The Finance Minister also drew attention to the necessity for maintaining rail communications between Delhi and the other main centres of India—dislocation of the regular services causes panic and alarm Dr Matthai stated that until five days previously the line between Delhi and Muttra had been disturbed Now, however, trains were running regularly from Delhi to the main centres of India

Mr Bhabha gave his view that the main mischief-makers among the non-Muslim refugees in Delhi were those who might be regarded as the "floating population" and were living in camps and on the streets, rather than those who were living with friends and relatives He also emphasised that there were many Muslim elements which were causing trouble—particularly Meos from the surrounding villages The general feeling among these Muslim refugees from villages was that they wanted to go to Pakistan Mr Patel estimated the number of Muslim refugees who had come into Delhi from outside as some 6,000 The Prime Minister said that many of these had come from places in Delhi Province, but there were also a number from the United Provinces, of whom some had happened to be in Delhi when the trouble began

The Prime Minister recalled that various offers had been receieved from Provinces to accept non-Muslim refugees, but he pointed out that the Provinces concerned were mostly not very keen to accept the particular type of refugees who were causing most of the trouble, in groups He gave his view that East Punjab should take in non-Muslim refugees who had arrived from West Punjab

The Prime Minister also drew attention to the fact that among the non-Muslim refugees in Delhi were a number of middle-class and business people who did not require financial assistance towards re-settlement—but would, in fact, be able to spend

money themselves on this. He again made reference to the suggestion that a group of these people should build themselves a model town somewhere near Delhi Many of them also would be keen to settle in the city eventually chosen as capital of East Punjab

The Deputy Prime Minister said that he had received a delegation of non-Muslim refugees the previous day, who had asked him to put houses in Delhi evacuated by Muslims as their disposal He had said that he could not do this as the Muslim owners might return. They had replied that they did not see why they should not be given these houses as they had been turned out of their own homes in Pakistan

The Deputy Prime Minister pointed out that any refugee policy decided upon could not be put into effect unless methods were found of running refugee trains regularly between Delhi and Lahore He also drew attention to the fact that there were some three lakhs of Muslim refugees to be evacuated from Gurgaon. These people would certainly never go back to the States where they had come from It had been suggested that they might walk to Pakistan—but the distance involved was very great Mr Bhabha confirmed that all necessary steps had been taken to stop a further influx of refugees into Delhi

The Governor-General suggested a sub-committee should be appointed to deal with the problem of clearing Delhi of refugees.

Eighteenth Meeting, September 29, 1947

ITEM 4. THE RE-SETTLEMENT OF REFUGEES IN EAST PUNJAB

•••

Sardar Swaran Singh explained that refugees coming from West Punjab were first received at reception centres in Ferozepore, Amritsar and Gurdaspur Districts The period of the stay of the

refugees in these reception centres depended upon the type of refugees concerned Those arriving on foot usually only stayed for a day Sir Chandulal Trivedi said that owing to the slow progress of evacuation, he anticipated that some five lakhs of refugees would be left on the hands of his Government when the cold weather came The Prime Minister of East Punjab quoted figures from the 1941 Census, which showed that there should be no excess of refugees arriving from West Punjab However, class differentiations were concerned and it might well not be possible to give employment to all straight away Sir Chandulal Trivedi said that he was sure, whatever the figures might be, that there was bound to be a time-lag in putting plans into effect He would be surprised if the total which had not been re-settled by the time the cold weather came would be much less than five lakhs He did not include in this number people arriving in East Punjab from Delhi The main question at issue was that of providing covered accommodation In his view, the Government must supply this It might possibly be necessary to close agricultural and educational institutions Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar pointed out that the use of such institutions would go nowhere near solving the whole problem The Governor-General recalled that it had been decided to make a further 6,000 tents available and suggested that some of these might be used for the purpose of providing covered accommodation for these refugees Sardar Swaran Singh said that, provided sufficient tents were made available, it would be possible to accommodate two lakhs of refugees at the camp at Kurukshetra He said that it might be necessary to set up more camps

ITEM 8 THE MOVEMENT OF REFUGEES BY RAIL

The Governor-General recalled that the movement of Muslim refugee trains through East Punjab had been stopped after a series of most regrettable incidents Since the stoppage had been

imposed, there had been a meeting between Sardar Patel, the Maharaja of Patiala and other rulers of the Punjab States concerned These rulers had now taken over responsibility for the safe running of Muslim refugee trains through their own States.

Dr Matthai reported that there were very bad breaches in the main line between Ludhiana and Amritsar, owing to the recent heavy rains In one place four spans of a bridge had been destroyed An alternative route had been investigated but had also been found to be breached A third possibility was now being looked into

Major-General Rees said that he understood that the Commander, East Punjab Area was suggesting that these trains should go via Bhatinda The Maharaja of Patiala had been approached with a view to guaranteeing the safety of that route also

Sardar Swaran Singh gave his view that the railway staff had been principally to blame for the recent attacks on Muslim refugee trains They had been informed of the running times of these trains The information had not been passed on to the Superintendents of Police and District Commissioners concerned, although it had been announced over loudspeakers to the public in general Gangs had then gathered and attacked the trains. In the particular incident at the Khaksar College near Amritsar, there had been no actual breach of the railway track, but the driver had been threatened that he would be shot if he did not stop

Dr Matthai said that he was having all these allegations enquired into at a very high level He had got the impression that members of the railway staff had been accomplices in certain cases

The Prime Minister said that he had seen eye-witness accounts which showed that the behaviour of railway officials had in some cases been scandalous

Sardar Swaran Singh suggested that those members of the

East Punjab Railway staff who had come from West Punjab should be transferred He added that he had received secret information to the effect that on occasions trains had been delayed on a pretext, because the attackers were not ready

Dr Matthai said that he had received reports that the whole East Punjab Railway staff was infected, particularly with the feeling that things were being done for the benefit of one community only He said that there had been a certain amount of difficulty in getting together train crews He had sent out an appeal to all the General Managers for substitute staff but the response to this had been almost nil

Sir Chandulal Trivedi said that a scheme had been worked out by East Punjab Area for the protection of the Ambala-Amritsar line

Sir Rob Lockhart stated that it had been decided that the military escorts with Muslim refugee trains should in future be stronger, that these trains should contain flat mounting machine-guns, and that mobile road escorts should accompany them. From the military point of view, all was ready for movement to recommence

The Prime Minister emphasised that he would have to be informed before this movement did start again, so that he could tell Mr Liaquat Ali Khan He also pointed out that he had requested Mr Liaquat Ali Khan not to send refugee trains from West Punjab unless he was satisfied concerning their safety.

The Committee

directed the Minister of Railways to inform the Prime Minister as soon as a clear route for the running of Muslim refugee trains from Delhi to Lahore had been found, and this movement would recommence, so that the Prime Minister could inform Mr Liaquat Ali Khan, and to report on his investigation of allegations against the East Punjab Railway staff

The Prime Minister asked for news of a refugees train which was reported to have left the North West Frontier Province

Major-General Rees undertook to find out details of this.

The Prime Minister also undertook to discuss, at his next meeting with Mr Liaquat Ali Khan, the movement by train of non-Muslim refugees from the area beyond Lyallpur and Jhelum. It was pointed out that movement on foot from these areas was out of the question because of the distances involved

ITEM 9 THE MOVEMENT OF REFUGEES BY ROAD

Sardar Swaran Singh reported that 80,000 Muslim refugees had been successfully passed through Amritsar the previous day. There had been only one minor attack

Mr Thapar stated that 1,500 of these Muslim refugees had died on the road owing to exposure, cold, or exhaustion The heavy rains had been largely responsible for this as they had prevented any cooking being done Sardar Swaran Singh said that the majority of those who had died came from among a lakh of refugees who had been turned out of Kapurthala and for whom no food arrangements had been made Only some 4,000 to 5,000 more Muslim refugees were now left in Kapurthala Sardar Swaran Singh also said that he understood that Kapurthala was not co-operating in the rehabilitation of non-Muslim refugees arriving from West Punjab The Prime Minister said that he understood that in Faridkot the Raja and his brother had themselves taken over all land left by the Muslims Sardar Patel reported that Faridkot had now agreed to take 60,000 non-Muslim refugees, the other Punjab States had also said that they would accept certain numbers

The Prime Minister said that he had sent a number of telegrams to the Government of Pakistan insisting that the movement of non-Muslim refugees from Balloki Head should re-start. The latest reply which he had received from Lahore was that a final decision on this would be reached on Mr Liaquat Ali Khan's arrival there the previous day. It was now reported that

5,000 refugees had been allowed over Balloki Head

Sir Chandulal Trivedi undertook, on behalf of his Government, to go into the question of supplying food for Muslim refugee columns as a matter of high priority

Twenty-First Meeting, October 7, 1947

THE MOVEMENT OF MUSLIM REFUGEES BY TRAIN

•••

Mr Neogy said that this point had also been emphasised at the conference which had been held at Lahore on October 5 The Prime Minister of Pakistan had taken particular exception to the "dumping" of Meos across the Pakistan border The Pakistan Government's understanding of the situation was that all members of the minority community who wished to leave East and West Punjab, the Punjab States and the North West Frontier Province, would be given facilities to do so; but that this arrangement should not be extended to include other places

The Deputy Prime Minister said that he saw no reason, if the North West Frontier Province was included, why Delhi should not also be included

The Prime Minister asked what Mr Liaquat Ali Khan's view on the matter would be if he knew that Muslim refugees wished to leave Delhi The Minister Without Portfolio replied that he had asked Mr Liaquat Ali Khan whether he would make a public announcement to the effect that Pakistan was not prepared to receive Muslims who wanted to go there, other than from East Punjab Mr Liaquat Ali Khan had parried to the effect that it would be time enough to consider this if the Indian Government declared their inability to protect Muslims He added that Mr Liaquat Ali Khan had also objected to the movement of Muslim refugees from the United Provinces The Prime Minister pointed out that these refugees had orginally come from East

Punjab So far as Delhi was concerned, the position of the Government of India was that all those Muslims who wished to go should be granted full facilities.

Twenty-Sixth Meeting, November 7, 1947

ITEM 1 OUTSTANDING ITEMS (E C.P. 24)

●●●

Refugee Camps at Kurali and Karnal

In connection with Serial 305, Mr Kripalani reported that he had spent two hours the previous day going round the refugee camps at Karnal This had included a visit of over an hour to the Muslim camp there There were still 14,410 refugees in this camp, 5,500 had already been evacuated by train The conditions in the camp were good and sanitary arrangements were excellent Food supplies had been insufficient which was largely due to the fact that the Pakistan liaison officer only visited the camp once a week, which was not often enough Plans had been made on the assumption that many of the refugees would have their own food, but they had finished this some time previously. Food supplies were now being increased There was no shelter and no tents in this camp and the nights were very cold All the bullockcarts which the refugees had brought, had been broken up and used as fuel All the Muslims in this camp were very anxious to go to Pakistan The train movement was, of course, in the hands of the Military Evacuation Organisation.

●●●

Movement of Muslim Refugees from Rohtak

Mr Neogy said that a column of 40,000 Muslim refugees, which had since swelled to 70,000, had left Rohtak on October 29 This was about to reach Ferozepore District There had been a very few minor incidents in Hissar District

Incidents in West Punjab

Major-General Rees reported on Serial 309 He said that he had been in touch with Headquarters, Lahore District, concerning the attack on non-Muslim refugees at Umarkhot The report of the attack there had been received from Headquarters, Pakistan army, very soon after the last Emergency Committee Meeting This was to the effect that 30 non-Muslims had been killed and 60 wounded Of the attacking Muslims, 60 had been killed and many wounded. Major-General Key was confident that all attacks in West Punjab were being reported, but there was a varying time-lag

Major-General Rees stated that the figures of 30 killed and 40 wounded in the Jassar incident were confirmed He pointed out that these figures were very different to those which had been originally provided by Headquarters, 50 Para Brigade, to the effect that 1,500 had been killed and 900 wounded

The Committee

(*viii*) directed the Commander-in-Chief, Indian army, to examine why Headquarters, 50 Para Brigade had sent in such exaggerated figures of the casualties in the Jassar incident; and to report at the next meeting

Major-General Rees went on to say that Major-General Key had also said that he was receiving very alarming reports from the area of the Jammu frontier There was evidence to show that these reports were founded on fact and that a belt of three miles wide had been cleared by State troops on the far side of the border If villagers did not move out when they were told to, they were mortared

The Governor-General said that Lieutenant-General Messervy had told him that nothing was embittering relations so much as the reports on conditions in this area The Prime Minister said that, as he understood the position, Pakistan irregulars had crossed over some three-quarters of the total frontier length

between Jammu and Pakistan, the remaining one-quarter was in possession of the Kashmir State authorities The reported action of clearing a belt three miles wide on the Jammu side of the border had been done and finished with some time previously At present there were occasional inroads from the Pakistan side

Twenty-Seventh Meeting, November 14, 1947

ITEM 1 OUTSTANDING ITEMS (E C P 25)

Movement of Muslims from Delhi

Mr Neogy stated, in connection with Serial 310, that a train had been laid on to remove 8,000 Pakistan Government personnel and their families from Delhi the previous day This had, however, had to be cancelled because a large number of ordinary Muslim refugees, of whom there were 20,800 from Delhi City Gurgaon District and elsewhere, had reached the station first and prevented the right people from being loaded Arrangements would now be made to lay on another train, and special precautions would be taken to prevent unauthorised people reaching the platform Mr Neogy stated that he understood that the difficulty which prevented more trains being supplied for movement from Delhi was that the rakes which had gone to Pakistan had not been returned as quickly as had been anticipated

The Minister of Health gave her view that trains should be arranged for all the Muslim refugees in Delhi, they were all suffering and they all wanted to go to Pakistan

The Prime Minister pointed out that many Muslims who had not previously desired to leave had now changed their minds There appeared to be no end to the process of sending Muslim refugees by train from Delhi The feeling of insecurity continued. This was mainly a psychological problem, and the present Com

mittee was not the place to discuss this

ITEM 2 REHABILITATION POLICY

There was a general discussion on rehabilitation policy The following points were made in the course of this discussion. On the one hand

(*a*) Although it was difficult to estimate exact figures, it appeared probable that the population of East Punjab would, after all refugee movement was finished, be approximately one and a half million less than before the migration started

(*b*) At present eight acres of land were being allotted to a family of five persons in East Punjab The average holding in the United Provinces was two acres, and in Bengal half an acre

(*c*) If there was unoccupied land in other Provinces, the first claim to it should surely go to the inhabitants of these Provinces themselves, rather than to refugees from Punjab, where the average holdings were so much higher

(*d*) There was nevertheless a possibility of certain States being able to accommodate small numbers of agriculturists from the Punjab Some might also be accommodated in food gardening schemes The Andamans and Nicobar Islands were also mentioned at a possible centre of re-settlement But the large majority would have to remain in East Punjab

(*e*) Even before August 15 the economy of the Dehra Dun area had been ruined by an influx of refugees from the Punjab. This was likely to occur generally if a widespread dispersal of trading classes was arranged

(*f*) The spread of refugees throughout India was likely to lead to the danger of communal hostility also being spread to the areas to which they went

(*g*) After wealth had been destroyed on such a tremendous scale, someone had to pay The immediate burden would have to be shared by the whole of India The future burden must be

spread equitably, but full compensation could not be given to the richer refugees from West Punjab

(*h*) It was necessary to think in terms of East Punjab absorbing the whole of the refugees from West Punjab One problem could not be solved by creating half a dozen others

And on the other hand

(*i*) Although the average holdings in the Punjab were higher than elsewhere, the Punjab had for long depended mainly on agriculture The holdings in West Punjab had been particularly large and rich It would be very difficult to satisfy the refugees from West Punjab, a class of people who had seen very good days

(*j*) Before partition, almost the entire trade in West Punjab had been concentrated in the hands of Hindus and Sikhs In Lahore, for example 80-85 per cent of the trade had been controlled by Hindus and Sikhs The trade interests of these people had extended to other countries, such as Afghanistan.

(*k*) Likewise, before partition, some 95 per cent of the trade in East Punjab had been run by Hindus and Sikhs The remaining 5 per cent, in the hands of Muslims, related only to certain controlled commodities Trading classes were very vocal.

(*l*) At least some small traders from West Punjab could fit into the economy of other cities [illegible] India

(*m*) The choice was between a 500 per cent upset in East Punjab or a small percentage overall upset

The Committee agreed that this question should be further discussed between the Minister for Relief and Rehabilitation and the Minister Without Portfolio, and the East Punjab representatives It might also with advantage be discussed between the latter and the Prime Ministers of other Provinces who were coming to Delhi for the session of the Constituent Assembly.

SECTION III. INDIA AND PAKISTAN—ISSUES AND DISPUTES

A RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO DOMINIONS

Top Secret

NOTE BY GENERAL LORD ISMAY, ON HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH MR JINNAH AT KARACHI, SEPTEMBER 12-14, 1947

SECRET COUNCIL TO THE RECORD OF MY TALKS WITH MR JINNAH AT KARACHI FROM SEPTEMBER 12-14, 1947
For the eyes of H E the Governor-General only.

The attached record of my talks with Mr Jinnah has been dictated in a form which will enable it to be shown in confidence to Pandit Nehru I have, in fact, done so But you should know, and it should be on secret record, that during the first hour or so of my conversation with Mr Jinnah, he struck me as a man who had given up all hope of further co-operation with the Government of India "They will never keep faith," he said on the occasion, and on a later occasion "There is nothing for it but to fight it out "

•••

2 You will see from the attached record that I pursued two main objectives

(a) to persuade Mr Jinnah that the Government of India, and particularly Pandit Nehru, were sincerely, indeed fervently, desirous of gripping the problem and ending the slaughter,

and that whatever their performance, their good faith was unquestionable,

(*b*) to impress on Mr Jinnah the character and extent of the avalanche that had spread over India I told him of various storms that I myself had seen the British and French Governments trying to ride, and I repeated again and again that in my considered judgement no government in the world would not have been disrupted by the initial impact of the recent upheaval in Delhi

3 It is my earnest belief that I made some impression on Mr Jinnah, and that I left him in a more reasonable, or should I say less fatalistic, frame of mind

(SD) LORD ISMAY
September 20, 1947

Top Secret and Private

NOTE BY GENERAL LORD ISMAY ON HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH MR JINNAH ON SEPTEMBER 12-14, 1947

Introductory

1 The following notes represent an attempt to set out the salient features of my conversations with Mr Jinnah during the past three days These conversations extended in the aggregate over 11 hours Naturally, we went over the same ground not once but several times, and I have therefore thought that a convenient and concise method of portrayal would be first to set out all the more important points raised by Mr Jinnah—irrespective of the order in which they were raised—and then to set out all the more important of the points which I made at various times in reply

This somewhat artificial arrangement will, I trust, not only

avoid repetition, but also give a better idea of the atmosphere. I do not claim that I have been able to recall the exact words used either by Mr Jinnah or myself, but I am satisfied that their general sense accords with what was said

Mr Jinnah's Points

2 Mr Jinnah said that he found it difficult to believe that the Government of India were really in earnest, in spite of their oft-avowed assertions of their determination to restore law and order and to protect minorities, especially, of course, the Moslems Indeed, he was being driven to the opposite conclusion.

3 It was obvious that the bloody scenes being enacted in the Punjab and in Delhi and the surrounding country were the result of plans that had been prepared in the greatest detail over many months The whole object of these plans was to exterminate Moslems, and disrupt Pakistan The whereabouts of all Moslems had been systematically reconnoitred arms had been collected; gangs of miscreants had been assembled and their duties apportioned, and finally at the appointed moment executive orders had been issued and the orgy of butchery had commenced.

4 It was not only Sikhs who had organised this criminal assault Many Hindus were involved, particularly the RSS, and it seemed fairly certain that members of Congress—not all of them men without influence—were also implicated How came it then that the ring-leaders were not already identified and arrested or destroyed?

5 It would be recalled that a short time before the transfer of power, irrefutable evidence had been received about certain deep-laid plots, and that it had been decided to pick up the ring-leaders before they could strike But apparently the responsible authorities had lost their nerve Nothing was done The opportunity of preventing the outbreak, or at least of dislocating the dastardly plans, was thus cast away

6 Even so, was it reasonable, or even possible to suppose that

the Government of India had no means of locating the ring-leaders and bringing them to book? What had been done about it? What was going to be done about it?

7 How could anyone believe in the good faith and honest determination of a Government who had, with commendable courage, prescribed the kirpan, only to cancel the order two days later? How was it possible to continue to permit the carrying of a religious emblem which had been so shamefully abused? Sikh prisoners in gaol were not allowed kirpans. Why should they be allowed to criminals at large?

8 The situation in Delhi and the surrounding country was a further example of the lack of good faith on the part of the Government of India Thousands of Moslems had been butchered, and those that had so far survived this holocaust were either hiding in terror of their lives, or herded together in so-called refugee camps The conditions in those camps, as reported by the High Commissioner for Pakistan and other eye witnesses, were shameful beyond belief There was no food, no water, no medical attention, no sanitary arrangements, there was not even security How could a responsible Government permit such a state of affairs?

9 The rate of progress of the evacuation of Moslems to Pakistan was yet another example of failure to keep their promises on the part of the Government of India Could they not, with all the resources at their disposal, despatch by train from Delhi to Pakistan the Moslems who were awaiting transfer?

10 As for the Punjab, both Governments had solemnly agreed that they would do all in their power to expedite and secure the movement of refugees In spite of this, reports showed that, whereas the evacuation of non-Moslems from West Punjab was proceeding apace, the evacuation of Moslems from East Punjab was practically stagnant Could it be that they were being deliberately held back until all non-Moslems had crossed the frontier into India?

11 It was not as though the Government of India had not got ample resources Reports reaching him suggested that the Police were not doing their duty, and were indeed implicated to some extent in the disorders But there was a large army This might contain tainted elements, but there should be enough and to spare, to cope with all problems, provided that higher authority had the will and the guts to give the necessary orders

12 To sum up, Mr Jinnah gave me the impression in our first talk, though not after he had heard the explanations that I was able to give, that he had almost abandoned hope of getting any real co-operation out of the Government of India

Points Made by Myself

13 At the outset, and indeed throughout the conversations, I expressed with all the force at my command complete conviction that it was the ardent and sincere desire of the Indian leaders

(a) to reassert law and order throughout India, and particularly in the Punjab and in the Delhi district,

(b) to look after all Moslems in their territory, and to evacuate to Pakistan those who wished to go there at the earliest possible moment, and in the greatest possible security,

(c) to co operate wholeheartedly with the Pakistan Government in (a) and (b) above

14 No-one who during the last week had seen the Government of India at their work, and had been present at their conferences, could possibly doubt their good faith, or their courage, or their grim determination to grapple with the stupendous task that confronted them or their readiness to adopt the most ruthless and unpopular measures in order to achieve their purpose Could anyone who knew Pandit Nehru doubt his humanitarian principles or his courage? I for my part was prepared to stake my life on that conviction This I repeated over and over again

15 I hope that I am not optimistic in believing that I made

some effect on Mr Jinnah In one of my last conversations with him, he said to me, "I know that you are sincerely convinced that the Government of India are doing their very best I pray to God that you are right, but only results can prove it If they fail to grip the situation in spite of all the resources at their command, you will be proved wrong"

16 My next objective was to give Mr Jinnah some idea of the appalling difficulties of the situation in Delhi Fighting between large bodies in some districts, arson, loot and individual murder in others, crowds of destitute refugees to be collected and given security, food supplies both wholesale and retail disrupted, the first because there was no labour to unload and distribute consignments arriving by train, the second because all markets and food shops were closed; the telephone system dislocated by the absence of operators who could not get to their work, the central administration hampered by the absence of clerical staff for similar reasons, the hospitals choked with wounded and dying, handicapped by the presence, and likewise the absence, of Moslem members of their staffs, and appealing frantically for food, medical supplies and above all protection, the dead lying where they had fallen because there was nobody to collect and bury them Appeals for protection from the Corps Diplomatique, from essential services, from in fact all quarters

17 It was a situation which in my considered opinion would have at the outset temporarily disrupted any Government in the world, however efficiently organised, however determined, and however long their experience of government The Indian leaders had at once sprung into action The necessary machinery for dealing with the thousand and one problems had at once been set up Every Minister and official was working at it day and night On all sides there was a determination to ride the storm Speaking as an observer, I was sure they would do so

•••

The High Commissioner for Pakistan

18 In the course of a conversation in Mr Jinnah's office on Saturday morning, the 13th, Mr Jinnah said that he had the most disturbing reports from the High Commissioner for Pakistan in India So much so that he doubted whether there was any good purpose in his returning to his post He was anxious that I should hear what he had to say in his presence. I, of course, welcomed this, but added that I had already had several long talks in Delhi with Mr Zahid Hussain,* that Lord Mountbatten and I had both done our utmost to help him, and that the Government of India were sincerely desirous of doing everything in their power for him I was sure that there had been a very great improvement in his position during the last two or three days, and that this improvement would continue as the situation in Delhi became more and more under control There was vital work for the Pakistan High Commissioner in Delhi and it would be in the last degree deplorable if he were not to come back with me as arranged

19 Mr Zahid Hussain was duly summoned and enumerated a catalogue of his difficulties and trials His telephone was broken; his house was swarming with refugees in terror of their lives, he had no messengers, the despatch rider which had been promised him by the External Affairs Department had not materialised, he could only get petrol for one car In fact, he was cut off from the world and to all intents and purposes a prisoner in his house. There was no accommodation for his staff all of whom, accompanied by their families, were lodged in Pakistan House—and so on and so forth

20 I reminded Mr Zahid Hussain categorically of the conversations that we had together when things had been at their very worst about September 10 or 11, and of my promise to use any good offices that I could command to help him He acknowl-

*High Commissioner for Pakistan in India

edged this, but asserted that whatever orders were given by Ministers, he had met with complete obstruction at the lower levels in the fulfilment of these promises.

21 I said that the Government of India were, to my certain knowledge, fully alive to the imperative importance of giving all possible facilities to the Corps Diplomatique and particularly to the High Commissioner for Pakistan If promise had outrun performance, this was due to the appalling dislocation in Delhi and not to any lack of desire on the part of the Government of India to give him all possible assistance I concluded by suggesting that if the Indian Government would appoint a liaison officer to the High Commissioner, who would accompany him on his visits to the various Departments from whom he required assistance, I had no doubt that Mr Zahid Hussain would be able to do the most admirable and imperative work

22 I got the impression that as a result of this conversation, Mr Jinnah was inclined to think that Mr Zahid Hussain had exaggerated of his difficulties and had not risen to the level of events In any event, he told him in my presence that he should return with me on Sunday, the 14th, and that he should take advantage of the promise that I had given him on behalf of the Governor-General and the Government of India that everything possible would be done for him

23 I have forgotten to mention that in the course of this talk, Mr Zahid Hussain began to enlarge upon the difficulties of obtaining suitable accommodation in Delhi for his staff I pointed out, and Mr Jinnah entirely supported me, that the problem was twofold The first was the short term problem of making such temporary arrangements as were possible in the present emergency The second was the long term problem of ultimate accommodation for a large and settled staff

Emergency Committees

24 I described in very general terms the set-up and procedure

of the Cabinet Emergency Committee and informed Mr Jinnah that similar organisations had been set up in the East Punjab and Delhi I noted that he had also set up a central Emergency Committee in Karachi (He was, in fact, presiding at a meeting of the Committee just before our talk on the morning of the 13th) I asked whether he thought that it would be useful to have periodical joint meetings between the main Commitees and their counterparts in the East and West Punjab

25 Mr Jinnah gave me the impression, without saying so categorically, that all the necessary co-ordination could be achieved by the meetings of the respective Prime Ministers and other Ministers I am bound to say that I agree with this view.

CONCLUSION

26 I cannot say whether I have had the slightest effect in persuading Mr Jinnah of the good faith, the energy, and the courage with which the Prime Minister of India and his Cabinet are tackling the situation But I got the impression that my visit had not been altogether fruitless In any event, he pressed me on several occasions, and with great sincerity, to repeat it as soon and as often as I liked

September 14, 1947

Top Secret

Record of a Conversation between Lord Ismay and Mr Jinnah at Karachi on October 3, 1947

1 I had a two-hour talk with Mr Jinnah last night The general impressions he left as to his state of mind were

(a) that the Government of India have neither the wish nor the power to protect minorities or to stop the carnage,

(b) that the Government of India, and also Mr Gandhi, are determined on the destruction of Pakistan,
(c) that, in view of (a) and (b) above, it is impossible to see how war, or something very like it, between the two countries can be avoided for much longer,
(d) that I, and indeed most of my countrymen, are totally incapable of understanding the working of the Hindu mind, and that we are very gullible

2 *The Government of India*

At the outset of our talk, I asked Mr Jinnah what he thought of the theory that the Hindu Mahasabha and the RSS, with the support of Sikh terrorist organisations were out to overthrow the present Government of India He replied that this was an ingenious fiction designed to magnify the difficulties, and excuse the impotence of the Government of India I asked whether he seriously doubted Nehru's sincerity and statesmanship, to which he replied that Nehru himself was a figurehead, vain, loquacious, unbalanced, unpractical, and that the real and almost absolute power lay with Patel, who was actively aided and abetted by Gandhi

This was a "new one on me" and I tried it on Suhrawardy this morning He took the exactly opposite line, stating categorically that Nehru was Gandhi's favourite and stood far higher in his estimation than Patel

3 *Mr Patel*

Mr Jinnah went on to say that the Government of India would certainly not fail unless Patel wished it Patel had, so to speak, 75 per cent of the total power of India in his hands, and could stop all the troubles in a week, if he were so minded, and if he were not so implacably anti-Moslem I intervened with the observation that Patel had made a very good speech at Amritsar a few days ago, only to be assured that Patel had made it with

his tongue in his cheek, and had been at pains to introduce the astonishingly pernicious statement that "*all* Moslems must be cleared out of the East Punjab" I suggested that surely this was a mis-quotation or at least taken out of its context Was not Patel's meaning roughly this "It is important for the sake of our own refugees in West Punjab that the Moslem refugees in East Punjab should be moved to Pakistan with the greatest possible speed and the greatest possible security" But Mr Jinnah would have none of this!

4 *Gandhi*

He went on to dilate upon the wicked guile of Gandhi, who while outwardly preaching brotherly love and tolerance, was intent on destroying Pakistan "In every one of his speeches," said Mr Jinnah, "there is a drop of poison *You*, of course, can't detect this poison, but the Hindus for whose edification it is instilled, have no difficulty in grasping his meaning and nor do I, who know him inside out" I admitted, with suitable modesty, that I myself had failed to detect these regular doses of poison, whereupon Mr Gandhi's recent reference to war between India and Pakistan was trotted out three or four times, and I was reminded that some years ago Lord Halifax had described Gandhi as the "world's greatest bamboozler"

5 *The Cabinet*

To my question as to what he thought of the remainder of the Cabinet, other than Nehru and Patel, Mr Jinnah went through them one by one I cannot recall his descriptions, but broadly speaking they were all lightweights who were either fools or crooks

6 *The Sikhs*

Mr Jinnah had a lot to say about the Sikhs, and was emphatic that it was they who were at the bottom of all the trouble The

movement could have been nipped in the bud if Mountbatten had not given way to Patel's persuasions and reversed the decision taken by all parties before the transfer of power to round up all the ringleaders. The arrogance of the Sikhs was now overawing and their armed strength considerable. But even so, the Government of India could easily suppress them, if they were so minded But Patel would have none of this Look what he had done in getting the order against kirpans prematurely cancelled

About four-fifths of the Sikhs from West Punjab had already crossed over to the East Punjab

I questioned this and recalled the column of half a million or so that I had myself seen approaching Baloka bridgehead, but Mr Jinnah brushed this aside by saying that two million were involved, and that over 1½ million had already come across.

What were these people going to do? As he saw it, they could either go Delhi way or Lahore way, and he himself was pretty sure that they would choose the latter It would be the Greek guerilla game over again, with India and the Sikh States playing Russia's part Those incursions across the Punjab frontier would set Pakistan a difficult problem, observing that they already had the NW Frontier of India to look after—a five crore (?) commitment.

7 *NWFP*

This brought Mr Jinnah to the position on the NW Frontier. So far things had gone very well There had been incipient trouble, but Cunningham* had ably dealt with it, there had also been a little trouble in Baluchistan, but this too had been suppressed All the tribes were for the moment pretty quiet, and the Faqir of IPI, who was the only nuisance, was getting an old man Eventually—say, in four or five years—the NW Frontier

*Sir George Cunningham, Governor of NWFP from 1937-46

was going to be a paying proposition [How, he did not explain] Meanwhile it was costing 4-5 crores(?) a year It was amazing that the Government of India did not realise that the NW Frontier was their frontier just as much as it was Pakistan's If the Afghan army and air force, backed up by the tribes, were to send through the Pakistan forces, India would be in the gravest peril While emphatically agreeing that the NW Frontier was essentially the joint responsibility of India and Pakistan, and earnestly hoping that this fundamental fact would be recognised when Pakistan and India were again on friendly terms, I felt it right to mention that the Afghan armed forces were pretty second rate Mr Jinnah did not dissent, but thought it highly probable that they would be heavily supported by Russia. Afghanistan's solitary vote against Pakistan joining UNO was significant that Russia put them up to it How could the handful of Indian squadrons cope with a heavy Russian air attack? I thought it as well to hazard the personal view that if Russia took any *overt* action against India, Great Britain and the USA were not likely to stand idly by

8 *Mr Jinnah's Immediate Requirements*

Towards the end of our talk, Mr Jinnah asked me point blank why I was going to England. I replied that the intention was to give HMG a first hand account of what had happened, is happening and might happen in this sub-continent I added that the visit was being undertaken on my own suggestion, wholeheartedly endorsed by Lord Mountbatten, and *not* on the invitation of HMG in UK I then asked whether there were any messages that he would like me to give to Mr Attlee, hoping that this would draw him on the question of his recent appeal to all the Dominions

[It is extraordinary that he should have made no mention of this either during my previous eleven hours' so called heart to heart talks with him—or on the present occasion] But not a bit of it He said that he wanted two things—loan and military

equipment As to the first, he had only 20 crores to carry on with. It was therefore essential for him to raise money somewhere As the last recruit to the British Commonwealth of Nations, he would much prefer to get it from the senior partner I said that finance was right outside my boat, and my understanding, but that I would of course deliver the message Had he already made any approach in the matter? And what sort of figure had he in mind? On the first point he said, no, he would not like to put in a formal request unless he had good reason to believe that it would be granted And on the second, he was equally vague. He said that he would like as much as the UK could afford

This approach seemed to me so curious, that I wondered whether I had not misunderstood, and repeated both questions in different form

9 On the question of equipment, Mr Jinnah said that the Government of India, as represented by Patel, were determined that Pakistan should not have her share of reserve equipment in India, and he asked for my good offices There ensued a conversation which showed that Mr Jinnah knew even less than I do about this technical business

10 Mr Jinnah was as usual very friendly. He had got up a special dinner party for me, and kept me back talking for nearly two hours after his other guests had left On saying goodbye he pressed me twice to be sure to stay with him on my way back to Delhi. But for all that I managed to elicit from him, I have come regretfully to the conclusion that he thinks me a rather nice silly ass

Record of Governor-General's Interview with Mr Ghulam Mohd , Sir Archibald Rowlands,† and V P Menon, on November 26 1947*

The "Re-Absorption" of Pakistan

Mr Ghulam Mohd said that the underlying cause of all the

*Finance Minister of Pakistan

†Adviser to the Government of Pakistan.

present ill feeling was Pakistan's fear that India intended to re-absorb Pakistan He said that Pandit Nehru, Jayaprakash Narayan and many other prominent Indian leaders had been quoted recently as saying that they gave Pakistan two or three years at the most to survive One step which would sweep away fear, mistrust and misunderstanding more than any other would be a categorical assurance by the Government of India that so far as they were concerned, Pakistan was a permanency

His Excellency told Mr Ghulam Mohd that the one fear of Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel on June 3 had been that Mr Jinnah's last demands had not been made, and that he would continue an agitation, after the settlement, to increase the size of Pakistan.

They, for their part, had undertaken to regard the settlement as final

Mr Menon assured Mr Ghulam Mohd that India had no desire whatsoever to strangle Pakistan, economically or militarily He explained the historical background which made the Hindus fear that the Muslims would reconquer India It was clear that fear of the other was the over-riding sentiment in each Dominion, and that elimination of this fear was the first essential towards co-operation

Co-operation Between the Dominions

Everyone present declared their faith in eventual complete co-operation between India and Pakistan There would be a common defence policy—for this it was essential that the Joint Defence Council should remain in existence Military co-operation would begin with staff talks and lead to permanent agreements There was no infringement of sovereignty in reaching agreement on all matters of common concern—indeed the power to negotiate for and reach agreements was the very essence of individual sovereignty Mr Ghulam Mohd said that without co-operation Pakistan, the poorer power, might be forced to turn to Russia

He fully agreed that the North West Frontier was equally vital to India as to Pakistan, and that there should he open frontiers in both the Punjab and Bengal

Both sides were also fully agreed on the desirability of a common economic policy Any contrary views which might have been expressed, or contrary action taken, in this regard, were due to misunderstandings and the failure of high-level representatives from either Dominion to meet together

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan on November 26, 1947

It had been about two months since the Prime Ministers had had an opportunity of meeting, largely owing to the serious illness of Mr Liaquat Ali Khan and Pandit Nehru's indisposition which prevented him from going to Lahore It may be imagined, therefore, that I was looking forward to really important results from the present meeting

I was quite horrified to be handed, just before lunch, a letter from Pandit Nehru

Fortunately I had invited him to luncheon, and fortunately, also, Mr Liaquat Ali was not fit enough to come down to luncheon and retired to bed. This gave me a chance of speaking to Pandit Nehru after lunch and "working on him".

I pointed out that the fate of 400,000,000 people might very well hang on the ability of the two Prime Ministers to hold unrestricted conversation without any prejudices or hurt feelings, and although I considered that Mr Liaquat Ali Khan had been ill mannered and gauche in sending such a discourteous telegram about India's attitude on Kashmir, to Mr Attlee, I felt it essential that Pandit Nehru should rise above this and see the P M of

Pakistan I arranged that they should meet at 4 o'clock, after the afternoon session of the Joint Defence Council

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with Indian and Pakistani Ministers on November 27, 1947

Mr V P Menon had gone to see Sardar Patel at 8 o'clock and had had a very stiff fight with him to bring him round to my point of view. He had forgotten to give him my message to come at 9 o'clock and so we only telephoned at 9 15 and he arrived at 9.30 This had the advantage of enabling me to have a private conversation with Pandit Nehru first to try to obtain his agreement to the line I wanted to take When Sardar Patel came, Pandit Nehru supported me in obtaining Sardar Patel's agreement

At ten o'clock, we three* went upstairs and met Mr Liaquat Ali Khan, Mr Ghulam Mohd and Mr Mahomed Ali.† I broke the ice by saying that this meeting was called entirely on my own initiative and was based on a remark which Pandit Nehru had made to Mr Liaquat Ali Khan at their meeting yesterday This remark was to the effect that the situation between India and Pakistan was not static but dynamic either matters were going to continue to get worse and worse until finally complete conflict became inevitable, or matters would take a turn for the better and go on improving

I said that although the previous evening this remark had passed off almost unnoticed, it had made a deep impression on me and I felt that something must be done and someone must take the initiative in arresting and reversing the vicious circle

*Lord Mountbatten, Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel
†Secretray-General of Pakistan

from revolving with increasing momentum towards complete conflict

I pointed out that both Dominions were going to be the sufferers, not only from actual conflict but even from this wordy warfare I said it was painful for me, as the late Viceroy of India, to hear the remarks passed by intelligent people in London that at last the truth about Indians was being published to the world by themselves, that there was little doubt that Pakistan was telling the truth about India, and India the truth about Pakistan I pointed out that India and Pakistan were in fact, in the eyes of the world today, the mud-stained figures that the opposite Dominion was painting them to be

I pointed out that in any conflict, even though the weaker might go to the wall, the injury to the stronger would be irreparable within our time

I suggested that a new approach was essential, and that although I didn't expect miracles and a complete change of heart throughout the two countries in a single day, I felt that if we could seize upon one single item as a starting point and decide to conduct all future negotiations in a spirit of goodwill, other matters would fall into place

My proposal was that the new Joint Defence Council, which had been agreed upon to succeed the present set-up after the departure of the Supreme Commanders, H Q , should be more than a body dealing with the mechanics of partition, it should be the nucleus of a new understanding between the two Dominions I suggested that, in addition to the Defence Ministers, the Prime Ministers should normally be members, to which Pandit Nehru agreed

I suggested that we should put on the agenda for the next meeting the question of the overall defence of the whole sub-continent of India against external aggression, and that we should publicise this fact For once the world knew that the two Dominions were getting together on a matter as vital as this

they would begin to feel and say "Well, these two Dominions may be out to black each other's eyes, but by God they intend to stand together against any *external* aggressor"

I expressed the view that the Joint Defence Council might later on embrace other subjects of common interest without the two Dominions losing one iota of their individual sovereignty

Pandit Nehru then took up the running with a perfectly admirable and reasoned speech, in which he entirely endorsed what I had said and expressed his complete readiness for immediate discussions along the lines I had proposed, and expressed the hope that other matters would be dealt with equally sympathetically.

Mr Liaquat Ali Khan then spoke in support of my ideas, and said that if responsible leaders of India could make it clear that they had no intention of trying to coerce Pakistan into an unwilling union or to force her into subjection, then he was sure that everybody in Pakistan would be ready to play

Pandit Nehru willingly gave this assurance and said that he was sure that ways and means could be found to put this over within India and to Pakistan

I had already suggested that Mr Liaquat Ali Khan and the Pakistan delegates should not leave Delhi today and Pandit Nehru endorsed this invitation which Mr Liaquat Ali Khan accepted

Mr Ghulam Mohd then came in with a very valuable contribution, all the more so in view of his extremely vitriolic speech published in *Dawn* two days ago

I invited Sardar Patel to express his views, and he was most forthcoming and said he agreed with all that had been said and would do his best to see that the Press of India hereafter took a more friendly line towards Pakistan, and he hoped that the same would be possible in Pakistan, particularly in the paper *Dawn*.

Mr Mahomed Ali, in reply to my questioning look, briefly expressed his intense gratification at the turn of events

I persuaded Sardar Patel and Mr Ghulam Mohd to put off their 11 o'clock economic meeting until 11 30 and to put off the Partition Council meeting from 3 o'clock today to 10 o'clock the following morning I pointed out that although there would be a small Emergency Committee to meet the Governor of East Punjab, I was sure we could do without the Deputy Prime Minister who could meet him later

Shortly before 11, Pandit Nehru had to leave, to go to the Assembly, and the meeting broke up with mutual expression of sincere goodwill all round

I then saw Mr V P Menon and Mr H M Patel and enlisted their help to ensure that the economic discussions on the balances and debts were conducted in a friendly atmosphere Mr Patel said he had already had friendly discussions with Mr Mahomed Ali, and was delighted to hear that the politicians were following suit

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan on November 28, 1947

Pandit Nehru came to see me at 9 45 p m and we had a three-quarters of an hour preliminary talk, before we both went up to see Mr Liaquat Ali Khan, at which we cleared our minds on the present position reached in the inter-Dominion talks I was glad to find Pandit Nehru as seriously anxious as I was myself to maintain the improved relations between himself and his opposite number, and in fact to further the improvement and thus continue to improve the relations between the Dominions He felt, however, that it was not yet possible to meet all Mr Liaquat Ali's points about Kashmir, though he was far from closing his mind

to finding acceptable solutions

My last request to him was to mention his proposed telegram to Mr Attlee in reply to Mr Liaquat Ali's while we were at the meeting Curiously enough Pandit Nehru seemed reluctant to discuss this telegram, which he said was really only his own business, if, however, I set great store by his mentioning it to Mr Liaquat Ali, he would do so I begged him to do so as I said that it would be a positive contribution towards the new atmosphere of goodwill

We then went on to see Mr Liaquat Ali Khan in his room; he looked very tired after his long day but was cheerful, all the same, at the turn events had taken

B SHARING OF THE CASH BALANCES

Note of an Interview with Mr Ghulam Mohd, Sir Archibald Rowlands, and V P Menon on November 26, 1947

Cash Advances to Pakistan

The Pakistan representatives had come to Delhi particularly to ask for a further cash advance, above the 20 crores, out of the all-India total of 400 crores which had been allotted to Pakistan before partition Mr Menon said that there would be no difficulty at all in stepping up this amount to 80 or 100 crores if the conversations on the more important political matters went well This would fall into line automatically as the chief issues were settled

Pakistan's Share of the National Debt

H E told the Pakistan representatives that, if they were to get an increased cash advance, they in their turn would have to contribute something towards the negotiations Perhaps they might offer to increase their share of the debt, which they at present claimed to be only 7 per cent

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview and Meeting with the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister of India, the Prime Minister and Finance Minister and Secretary-General of Pakistan, on November 27, 1947

This meeting opened in a very cheerful frame of mind because the result of the morning's talk had undoubtedly contributed to resolving the impasse which had previously been reached between India and Pakistan on the question of finances The Indian representatives had agreed to give another 55 crores to Pakistan making a total of 75, and the Pakistan representatives had agreed to raise their share of the Indian debt from 7 to 17 per cent

I began this meeting by pointing out that surely the best evidence that India had no intention of throttling Pakistan was the fact that they had voluntarily and immediately released a further 55 crores with a four year moratorium and 50 years to pay back.

I asked Mr Liaquat Ali how his conversation with Mr Gandhi had gone He gave a glowing account saying that they were in complete agreement on practically every subject, and that he had never really had a chance of talking to Mr Gandhi like this before

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with Pandit Nehru, Mr Liaquat Ali Khan, Sardar Patel, Mr Ghulam Mohd , Mr H M Patel, Mr V P Menon, and Mr Mohd. Ali on November 28, 1947*

A draft communique on financial issues was considered first. His Excellency read out the statement prepared by Mr H M.

*Cabinet Secretary of India

Patel at the instance of Sardar Patel, there was general agreement that the final communique should be expanded as indicated herein, and also to draw further attention to the concessions made by Pakistan

The Pakistan representatives showed concern at the extract from His Excellency's statement which read "We should not therefore regard the settlement of these two issues as final until a settlement is reached on all the outstanding partition and other matters" After discussion this was clarified to mean that efforts would be made to resolve every possible issue between the two Governments, and that no announcement would be made until this had been done

So far as the property of evacuees, and banking matters, were concerned, Mr Liaquat Ali Khan stated that [illegible] had already been made for these questions to be discussed on an official level He felt that better results would be achieved if officials discussed them first There was general agreement with this

Top Secret

Annex 1

Draft Statement on Financial Issues (I)

As the result of high level discussions held in Delhi on November 27, between representatives of India and Pakistan complete agreement has been reached on the two most important financial issues which were still outstanding between the two Dominions These issues had been the subject of reference to the Arbitral Tribunal and this reference will now be withdrawn

•••

2 The two issues in question are

(*a*) the division between the two Dominions of cash balances

of the former Government of India on August 14, 1947; and

(*b*) the ratio in which the uncovered debt of the former Government of India, representing the excess of liabilities over assets, should be divided between the two Dominions

3 As regards the division of cash balances, Pakistan originally asked for 100 crores, and had been provisionally allotted 20 crores As the result of the recent discussions the final allotment to Pakistan has been agreed at 75 crores.

4 As regards the ratio of uncovered debt, the Government of India originally proposed that the Pakistan share should be 20 per cent whereas the Pakistan Government proposed that their share should be 7 per cent It has now agreed that the Pakistan share should be 17½ per cent.

Annex 2

Statement read out by the Governor-General of India at a Meeting at which the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan were present on Friday, November 28, 1974

1 Some very important features of the agreement reached on these two matters have not been brought out in this draft statement It does not show how far we have gone in an effort to meet Pakistan Let me set out what exactly we have agreed to

(1) We have agreed to let Pakistan have 75 crores of rupees out of the cash balances. I may say that it is in effect 84 crores, since we have between August 15 and today paid over 9 crores which would have been Pakistan's share of a loan which became due in that period for redemption

(2) We have agreed to Pakistan's share of the excess of the liabilities over assets being reduced from 20 per cent which we thought to be very reasonable to 17½ per cent, and what is more important, agreed to Pakistan's repaying the debt due to us in

50 annual equated instalments, the repayment commencing 4 years after the 15th of August 1947, and the rate of interest for the purpose being no more than what India herself would be paying on the various outstanding public loans involved

2 It is obvious that we have gone about this business not with a desire to strangle Pakistan at its very birth but indeed to see that it is helped at a stage when it stands most in need of help, that of course is not to say that we are acting in a wholly altruistic manner We realise that the economy of the two Dominions, which after all only a few months ago were one country, are complementary, and that India's economic interests would no be improved by Pakistan's economic collapse I should like here to say that I heard with very great staisfaction and would like to congratulate the Pakistan Government on their decision to take effective and immediate steps to reduce their expenditure on defence and other matters to a level commensurate with their income

3 The object of our present discussions is to iron out all our differences We should not, therefore, regard the settlement on these two issues as final until a settlement is reached on all the outstanding partition and other matters No announcement should, therefore, be made until such an overall settlement is achieved I referred to matters other than partition matters I did so advisedly It is not enough if we merely stop at ironing out the differences as between Governments We must also take steps which would result in a real improvement in the relations of the people of the two Dominions We must, therefore, achieve a settlement of the more important of the issues which estrange them. The first of these is the question of the property, movable and immovable, left behind by those who have had to move, by force of circumstances from one Dominion to another, bag and baggage A reasonable and fair policy, and the manner in which

it is to be implemented, ought to be agreed upon in this respect on considerations both of fairness and of humanity. The next most serious source of ill-feeling is the question of records, safe deposit vaults, etc., belonging to private banks and institutions. The sums involved are not very large from the point of view of either Government but the principle involved is important and the hardship to ordinary people very great. Again, if there is a genuine desire to improve the relations between the two Dominions, as there clearly appears to be, these are not problems, the solution of which should present any serious difficulty. There are other matters also: I need not enumerate these but I would ask that we do not part until we have found a solution for all of them, solution not merely in principle, but also as to the manner in which, when solutions are found, they are to be carried out in practice.

4. I would finally ask that we agree on two points. For the period of, let us say, six months or even three months if you prefer, we should impose a self-denying ordinance on ourselves and refrain from issuing public statements affecting each other that are not previously agreed upon between us. The second point on which I suggest we might agree is that we meet regularly, if necessary, to settle any important matters on which differences of any substance make their appearance; that method of settling things would be far more fruitful than to endeavour to settle them by letter or telegram.

Top Secret

COPY

December 23, 1947

The Hon Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru,
Prime Minister of the Government of India,
17, York Road,
New Delhi

My Dear—,

The Government of India have not yet implemented the recent financial agreements arrived at between the two Dominion Governments, on issues arising out of Partition, which had been referred to the Arbitral Tribunal

If these agreements had not been reached, the Arbitral Tribunal would have decided the cases and their decision would have been binding on the two Dominion Governments The agreements now reached are precisely in the same position legally as an award of the Arbitral Tribunal and must therefore be implemented forthwith.

The agreements regarding the division of the cash balances by which Pakistan was to get 75 crores and the assumption by Pakistan of liability for 17½ per cent of the uncovered debt were reached on the very first day of the recent negotiations These decisions were reached on their merits and there was no reference at all to any extraneous issue Their implementation was not dependent upon any other conditions When later, in the course of subsequent discussions, the suggestion was made by Indian representatives that the agreement on financial issues should form part of a wider settlement, including the Kashmir issue, it was made quite clear by the Pakistan representatives that the agreements on financial issues must stand by themselves and must not

be linked with any other issue This position was accepted by the Government of India representatives In the circumstances Sardar Patel's unilateral action in declaring in the Indian Legislature that the implementation of the financial agreements would be made more or less simultaneously with the settlement of the Kashmir issue is entirely unjustified and wrong.

The action of the Government of India in not having passed orders towards the implementation of these financial agreements is illegal, wrong and amounts to repudiation. The Pakistan Government must insist that the payment to Pakistan of her agreed and legal share of the cash balances should be made at once.

Yours sincerely
(Sd) LIAQUAT ALI KHAN

Top Secret

The Hon Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru,
Prime Minister of India,
17, York Road,
New Delhi.

When I said good-bye to Mr Liaquat Ali Khan at 10.30 this morning, he was extremely upset because the *Hindustan Times* and the *Indian News Chronicle* had published the following statement

"The implementation of the recent agreement arrived at between the two Dominions on the division of assets and liabilities, and the Rs 55 crores which Pakistan expects as immediate payment may also hang on a satisfactory solution of the Kashmir affair, it is suggested in political circles here It is stated that the Indian Dominion could not imperil its very existence by providing the sinews to wage what is an undeclared war against itself"

Mr Liaquat Ali Khan pointed out that, at the meeting between the Prime Ministers last night, you had agreed that there should be no publicity regarding the question of the date of implementing the financial agreements, and the "linking-up" of this implementation with an initial settlement in Kashmir

He himself had not signified full agreement on this point at the meeting, subsequent to it, however, he gave a verbal assurance that he would not allow any such publicity in Pakistan.

The reason, of course, for the decision to avoid publicity was primarily that it, and the resulting press comment, could but embitter relations, and, secondly, that the Government of Pakistan would subsequently, when the payment is made, be put in a very difficult position, as they would be accused of having called off the invaders for the sake of the remaining Rs 55 crores.

Mr Liaquat Ali Khan therefore regarded this statement, within a few hours of both Prime Ministers having agreed that there should be no publicity, as a breach of faith He had intended to send you a written protest on his return to Karachi, but I urged that he should not enter into further correspondence which would only exacerbate the situation He finally said that it would satisfy him if I were to transmit his protest to you

I think I should inform you of the fact that, although I understand he was extremely angry when he first saw the press statement, by the time I saw him he was sad and depressed since he felt that it was an indication that even a verbal agreement between the Prime Ministers was not going to be implemented

I made it clear to him that there could of course have been no question whatever of your having given this information to the Press after the meeting This he was quite willing to accept but he gave his view that the organisation in India was such that a decision reached with the Prime Minister was "apparently incapable of being implemented"

I am well aware that it is extremely doubtful if Mr Liaquat Ali Khan could, in similar circumstances, have "controlled" the

Pakistan Press in the way in which he apparently expected you to have "controlled" the Indian Press

I am also well aware that the comment of which Mr Liaquat Ali Khan complains has been common currency in the Indian Press for some days and is probably no more than a mere repetition, in the absence of any further guidance, of informed comment made before the meeting took place.

However, in view of the desirability of avoiding a further incident such as this, in view of the great delicacy of the present negotiations, and in view of the impossibility of preventing further speculation by any other means, I am sure that you will not mind my suggesting that steps should now be taken to give high-level off-the-record guidance to the leading Indian and foreign correspondents, which will help to keep them on the right lines.

(Sd) MOUNTBATTEN OF BURMA

Note of a Meeting with the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan at Lahore on January 11, 1948

•••

Perhaps the most important point which I was able to make at this meeting was towards convincing Mr Liaquat Ali that the Government of India were not endeavouring to throttle Pakistan financially or by any other means I pointed out that although the 55 crores were not going to be paid until the Kashmir question had been resolved, when the Governor of the Reserve Bank, Mr Deshmukh, had come to Delhi to seek the advice of the Government about the loan to Pakistan, Pandit Nehru in addition to recognising that the Governor had a free hand about making this loan, had expressed himself as entirely willing that the loan should be made and was even in favour of a further 5 crores being loaned, making ten in all

Pandit Nehru then asked Mr Liaquat Ali whether it was not a

fact that the Pakistan expenditure required about 5 crores a month Mr Liaquat nodded his head, and Pandit Nehru then pointed out that the ten crores should tide Pakistan over for at least two months, by which time he sincerely hoped that the balance of the 55 crores could be paid since he felt certain that the Kashmir question would have been resolved by then

I pointed out to Mr Liaquat Ali that although in theory the Reserve Bank was free to make such a loan, in practice the Governor and his Board of Dircetors could not fail to have been seriously affected if it had been made clear to them that they would be regarded as enemies to their own Dominion if they voted this loan Therefore Pandit Nehru's action was not negative but was definitely positive in the direction of assisting Pakistan

Mr Liaquat Ali seemed to be impressed by this argument, though he retorted "In that case why do you not do the honourable thing and pay up the 55 crores at once?" I answered that the finacial settlement had not been well received in the House, and that feeling in the country would be so strong if this money were now paid, at a time when it might be used to nourish a war against the Dominion of India, that I did not think he could expect the Government of India to adopt such a course until a settlement of the Kashmir issue was in sight

Record of Governor-General's Interview with Mahatma Gandhi on January 12, 1948

•••

Gandhi asked me what I thought about India refusing to pay the 55 crores that he had agreed as Pakistan's share of the balances I told him that I considered it to be unstatesmanlike and unwise, and that it was the only conscious act which I was aware of that the Government of India had taken, which I personally regarded as dishonourable The Mahatma expressed regret that he had not appreciated earlier the significance of this

act as he should have done something about it, but it was not until Rajkumari Amrit Kaur had spoken to him that this aspect was brought to his notice, and with my permission he proposed to attack the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister about this matter

I made one request and that was that he should make it clear that it was he who had started the conversation and had asked my views, and not I who was trying to get him to bring pressure to bear on the Government He readily gave this undertaking, and asked for more details

I told him that of the 400 odd crores of available cash balances, a certain proportion clearly belonged to Pakistan and the rest to India, since these balances had previously been earned by the united Indian nation Whehther the divisions were made on the basis of population, area, wealth or any other method of assesment, I found it difficult to believe that the 20 crores which represented rather more than 5 per cent of the total which had been paid to Pakistan on account, would be considered as adequate share for Pakistan It was clearly owed her some more, and the amount more could only be settled by the arbitral tribunal (as originally intended) or by a compromise agreement between the two Governments which in fact had been achieved, the figure being settled at 55 crores This figure was settled at the first series of Partition Council and Steering Committee meetings which had stated that no conditions whatever were attached in the Partition Council meetings to this agreement, and they expressed shock and surprise when Sardar Patel at the meetings held a few hours later at Government House first introduced the stipulation that agreement must be either on everything including Kashmir, otherwise no agreements would be vaild

The Mahatma took the view that once a decision had been arrived at at a meeting without any caveat being entered, that was binding on honourable men He remembered an occasion in prison when he had signed a foolish letter which had been

handed over to the prison authorities to post but which had not yet been posted His request for the return of the letter was turned down since the Governor regarded it as "in the post" since it had been handed over to his office Mahatma Gandhi had no fault to find with the Governor's decision, and he himself had had to stand by an awkward arrangement through being unable to withdraw this letter He added that another time he had been invited to address a youth movement in Finland The subconscious temptation to go to Finland was so great that he wrote out a telegram at once accepting He then went to the closet which gave him time to think over matters He said to himself, "What am I doing accepting an invitation to go to Finland? What have I got to say to the youth movement? What has it got to do with me? How foolish I have been I must try and stop the telegram," and so he says that he shouted through the door to stop the telegram, and indeed was so agitated that he came out of the closet without having achieved his primary purpose, though he did manage to stop the telegram in time

Therefore the Mahatma was of the opinion that the only honourable course for India was to pay out the 55 crores at once, and he now proposed to attack the Prime Minister, and Deputy Prime Minister and the Ministers concerned "Once my fast has started, they will not refuse me"

Record of an Interview with the Deputy Prime Minister (Sardar V Patel) and Mr V P Menon on January 13, 1948

Sardar Patel attacked me over the question of cash balances. He told me that both Rajkumari Amrit Kaur and Mahatma Gandhi had attacked him for withholding the 55 crores which belonged to Pakistan, and were pressing him to agree to the handing over of these funds.

He had been pained and surprised to hear that I had characterised his action as dishonourable

I told Sardar Patel that I had repeatedly said both separately to him, and to him in the presence of others and by implication to others who agreed with him, that this act was unwise, unstatesmanlike and the only conscious act that I could recall which the Government had taken which I regarded as dishonourable I told him that since the Partition Council had guaranteed this amount to Pakistan as their rightful share without raising any stipulations, I did not consider they had any right whatever to hold on to it now Sardar Patel reminded me that I was not present at the Partition Council and stated that the evidence given by Mohammed Ali and Ghulam Mohammed was at fault since he had made it clear at the meeting that this was only the first of many agreements that had to be negotiated, and if that had been misunderstood, Mr H M Patel had imformed Mr Mohammed Ali before the latter signed the letter to the arbitral tribunal withdrawing the request for the tribunal to consider these matters, that the agreements would not be implemented until all outstanding matters including Kashmir had been settled satisfactorily In addition to this, Sardar Patel had made a statement in the house which had been published, therefore from beginning to end Pakistan were fully aware of the position. He accused Pakistan of deliberately soft-pedalling the Kashmir issue and of misleading opinion in order to receive generous treatment over the cash balances

In particular he said, "Do you suppose we would have given 75 out of the 400 crores when the Hindus owned 90 per cent of the wealth of India? Do you suppose we would have gone out of our way to give them far more generous terms than they could ever have hoped to get from the arbitral tribunal unless it were in the hope that all outstanding issues including Kashmir would be settled once and for all at the same time?"

I said that in the light of all that Sardar Patel had told me, and in view of the fact that I was not present at the Partition Council, nor at the Steering Committee, and could only go on

hearsay, I was now prepared to withdraw the epithet "dishonourable", though I still considered their action was most unwise and unstatesmanlike, and would ultimately be a boomerang which would come back and hit the Dominion of India

C THE KASHMIR ISSUE

Top Secret

Note of a Meeting with the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan at Government House, New Delhi on November 26, 1947

I managed to see Mr Liaquat Ali Khan for ten minutes before Pandit Nehru joined us, and during this time I made it clear that I considered that he had been criminally foolish, putting it at its mildest, to infuriate Pandit Nehru each time there was about to be a meeting I reminded him that on the eve of his coming to the Lahore meeting the Pakistan Government had issued their notorious "Fraud and Violence" statement, which had prevented Pandit Nehru from coming, and now, on the eve of this meeting in Delhi, he had sent a telegram, which among other things violently attecked Sheikh Abdullah, to Mr Attlee

I told Mr Liaquat Ali Khan that Sheikh Abdullah was one of Pandit Nehru's greatest personal friends of 16 years' standing, and that nothing that could have been said could have annoyed him more than this attack on his friend

I urged him not to abuse Shiekh Abdullah in Pandit Nehru's presence or to pursue this line with him during the coming talks I said that in fact if he wished anything to come of these talks he had really got to take and altogether different attitude

I told him that Pandit Nehru had always said nice things about him and I believed that he liked him sincerely

Finally, I pointed out that Pakistan were in a very weak posi-

tion as there was nothing that they could possibly pin on India in connection with Kashmir since India had already offered a plebiscite under UNO and had put themselves right in the eyes of the world thereby

Pandit Nehru then came into the room and sat down in a very stern and forbidding manner, but he enquired very courteously after Mr Liaquat Ali Khan's health.

As neither of them made any attempt to mention the word Kashmir, I started the conversation by recapitulating the part which I had played since July, trying to get a plebiscite following the accession

Pandit Nehru then held forth for about three-quarters of an hour and gave a full account of events in Kashmir as he saw them

He said categorically that if the Dominion of India had not gone to the assistance of Kashmir when called upon, not only by the Ruler but by Sheikh Abdullah, the leader of the popular party, he had no doubt whatever that the present Government of India would have been overthrown and that it would have been replaced by an irresponsible and extremist government which, in his opinion, would certainly have declared war upon Pakistan

Mr Liaquat Ali Khan countered this bv saying that the Govenment of Pakistan had had their position greatly weakened by not taking strong action against India, and that he personally was being abused in the vernacular press for failing to support Muslim interests

Apart from this Mr Liaquat Ali Khan did not speak very much (he was obviously tired and weak), but he managed to ask some searching questions and to make some important observations, and, in the course of the talks, gradually formulated certain proposals which Pandit Nehru said he would consider

I summarised these proposals at the end of the meeting as follows

1 The Governments of India and Pakistan were in complete agreement

(*a*) that a plebiscite should be held to decide whether Kashmir should accede permanently to India, should change that accession in favour of Pakistan, or possibly retain some independent status in treaty relations with both Dominions, (this latter point was not formally agreed to but was mentioned),

(*b*) that a plebiscite should be held under the auspices of an independent body like UNO,

(*c*) that Indian troops would be withdrawn, except for small garrisons at vital strategic points to prevent further raids, as soon as the situation had cleared up,

(*d*) that full freedom of speech would be allowed before the election and that the administration should do nothing that would hamper the free expression of oipinions by the people, and

(*e*) that refugees who had come into Jammu and Kashmir from outside should either be sent back to their place of origin or passed on into the Dominion of their choice, and that refugees who had left Jammu and Kashmir should return In other words, there was complete agreement that the status quo in population (less the people killed) should be restored before the plebiscite

2 The Pakistan Government wished

(*a*) that Sheikh Abdullah should take into his Government ministers of the opposition party and form a coalition;

(*b*) that UNO delegates should be sent for as early as possible to speed up the process of starting the plebiscite and to act as preliminary observers, and

(*c*) that alternatively, an entirely independent and impartial administration should be set up which would satisfy the people in Pakistan

Pandit Nehru had to leave to attend the Budget Session in the Assembly, but at my request he promised to draft a telegram to

Mr Attlee in answer to Mr Liaquat Ali Khan's, and to bring it at 9 o'clock the following morning to show us both, so that if possible he could add a paragraph to say that this telegram had been discussed with his opposite number and either agreed to or agreed to with certain specific observations

We (Pandit Nehru and I) left the room together I was feeling jubilant that the meeting had at last taken place, that the strained atmosphere had been broken down and some real progress made I congratulated Pandit Nehru very warmly on his statesmanlike attitude and urged him once more to get on with the drafting of the telegram

He seemed in some doubt as to why I was so keen to have this telegram shown to Mr Liaquat Ali Khan, and I explained to him that Mr Liaquat Ali Khan's intemperate telegram to Mr Attlee could best be answered in this way For if it was followed by an extremely generous and statesmanlike telegram from Pandit Nehru showing that he had risen above these insults and had had a friendly discussion with Mr Liaquat Ali Khan in spite of them, and had even shown him, and obtained his agreement in, the proposal reply, this would have the most profound effect in favour of India in the mind of HMG

Note of a Meeting between the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister of India, the Prime Minister and Finance Minister and Secretary-General of Pakistan, and later, Lord Ismay and V P Menon, on November 27, 1947

•••

I then introduced the subject of Kashmir, and pointed out how near the two Governments were to reaching an agreement and how if the present spirit of goodwill continued, such an agreement should be capable of being reached during the present visit Long discussions went on in which everyone took part At

about 4.20 I realised that we were going to get nowhere with high level discussions without something concrete to bite on. I therefore suggested that two officials, one from each Dominion, should be instructed to prepare papers for our consideration, and suggested that the obvious people would be Mr Mohammed Ali and Mr V.P. Menon respectively.

I further suggested that they should sit under the impartial Chairmanship of Lord Ismay, and reminded them that he was not employed with the Government of India, and in any case was leaving India altogether in three days' time. I felt this would be a very suitable last service he could render to the sub-continent as a whole, particularly in view of his great prestige and vast experience in handing international matters of this sort. This had a very good reception by everyone present, and I immediately telephoned to both of them to come as soon as possible.

I pointed out that the real difficulty was that before Pakistan could appeal to the raiders, the local rebels and the people in Pakistan who were assisting them, to stop fighting, it would be necessary for them to be able to give an assurance that the object had been achieved, and further struggle was a useless waste of life. I pointed out that the object they were struggling for, could not even be started on until the fighting had stopped, and it was therefore a question of a public declaration giving the necessary assurances on the basis that the fighting would stop.

At this stage, Lord Ismay entered the meeting, followed a few minutes later by Mr V.P. Menon, and after Pandit Nehru had giving his general views, and Mr Liaquat Ali Khan had also expressed his views, the meeting broke up with arrangements to meet again at 11 o'clock the following morning.

Top Secrect

Note of a Meeting between Pandit Nehru,
Mr Liaquat Ali Khan, Sardar Patel, Mr Ghulam Mohd,
Mr H M Patel, Mr V P Menon, and Mr Mohd Ali and
Lord Ismay and Lt-Col Erskine Crum
on November 28, 1947

•••

The stand of the Pakistan representatives was that all Indian troops should be withdrawn without exception. Small contingents would not be able to stop tribesmen coming in, and it would be far better for Pakistan to undertake this responsibility and to be trusted to carry it out

The Indian representatives maintained that withdrawal should be a gradual process, depending on the conditions existing in the State Detachments on the frontier would anyhow, able to be prevent transport coming in Pandit Nehru was particularly insistent He pointed out that the States' forces had practically completely disintegrated, and that it was bound to be necessary to keep some Indian troops back to carry out the normal duties of maintaining law and order, which were likely to be greater than usual after the recent fighting He also made the paint that, practically, India could achieve their object by underhand methods in transferring units to the States' forces And there was likely to be more tension against States' forces than against Indian forces

His Excellency suggested that, if Indian troops remained in the country, this would serve Pakistan's purpose in the long run because their unpopularity would influence the people to vote, in the plebiscite, for Pakistan Mr Liaquat Ali Khan did not agree, but said that, if this was really considered a relevant factor, why not agree to putting Pakistan troops in to occupy Kashmir so that the people would then vote for India!

Sardar Patel eventually offered that Indian troops should be

withdrawn entirely from the Poonch area This concession appeared most welcome to the Pakistan representatives, who gave the impression that they would reconsider the question of the retention of Indian troops in other parts more favourably if this was guaranteed Pandit Nehru drew attention to the difficulty of defining the "Poonch area"

Mr Liaquat Ali Khan suggested that HMG should be asked to make British troops available for the plebiscite Pandit Nehru said ' British troops will never again enter Indian territory " His Excellency doubted whether HMG would agree to provide British troops for the purpose

There was discussion on whether Chitral and Gilgit should be counted as part of Kashmir or as independent States for the purpose of the plebiscite Mr Ghulam Mohd considered that this point should be referred for a legal ruling, but he pointed out that India would lose by the inclusion of Chitral, which was likely to vote en bloc for Pakistan

It was decided that the two Prime Ministers should consider the draft further that afternoon Mr Liaquat Ali Khan said that he had to leave the following day, it was suggested that a Joint Defence Council meeting should be held in Lahore during the first week of December to provide an opportunity for the continuance of the negotiations

Pandit Nehru said that he would have to consult the Maharaja of Kashmir about the proposals before they were finally accepted. Mr Liaquat Ali Khan countered by saying that he would likewise have to consult the head of the Azad Kashmir Government (He made it clear that Pakistan did not, however, recognise this Government)

Almost at the end of the meeting Sardar Patel suddenly flared up and said that he would reject any proposals that might be formulated about Kashmir unless Pakistan agreed to the principle of a plebiscite in Hyderabad A few moments later he was happy and laughing again; and it was difficult to tell how serious he

was in making this statement

•••

Both Prime Ministers agreed that Lord Ismay had been most useful and that his note on their meeting that day had been very helpful though they had certain comments to make on it

Paragraph (1)

Pandit Nehru thought it was impossible to give any advance undertaking as to the number and class composition of Indian troops and detachments which it was proposed to station in Kashmir I agreed with him that this was probably impracticable but suggested that at our next meeting we should discuss the proposal that the Government of India should give the Government of Pakistan full information as to troop movements and the composition and location of all units left in Kashmir *after* agreement about Kashmir as a whole had been reached between the two Governments

Mr Liaquat Ali stated that whereas this would help, what was really wanted was advance information of troop movements to enable them to offer comments if, for example, it was proposed to leave Sikhs in the Poonch area, which could only lead to trouble

I suggested that proposed movements could only be indicated to the Pakistan Government when they had been virtually decided on, but that as regards objectionable classes of troops, he had better tell us now or in the near future which troops he objected to Pandit Nehru agreed in principle and said that it would not be the intention of the Indian Government to retain, e g Sikhs in Kashmir, they would probably be among the first units to be moved out He reminded Mr Liaquat Ali that the Indian Government, in their own interests, did not wish to keep any units there whose presence could cause any friction

Mr Liaquat Ali Khan's suggestion, that proportionate repre-

sentation of communities in Kashmir should be permitted in the armed police and levies of Kashmir State, was next discussed.

Pandit Nehru pointed out that the administrative machine of Kashmir was antiquated, reactionary and weak, and required immediate strengthening and improving But Sheikh Abdullah very wisely had not thrown out all the unsatisfactory and reactionary officials of the Maharaja even though he personally disapproved of them, since this would have added to the chaos All he had done was to appoint advisers to be attached to the worst served departments to ensure that reasonable and progressive government was introduced Thus it would be seen that Sheikh Abdullah's policy was to build on the existing administration as far as possible

Mr Liaquat Ali Khan pointed out that the existing administration was probably as hostile to Pakistan as Sheikh Abdullah's advisers, and that what was wanted was a fair representation from all communities and parties in the State to ensure that the right atmosphere was preserved for the plebiscite

Pandit Nehru gave his view that Kashmir could be divided into four well defined areas, *viz* the valley of Srinagar itself, Poonch (with which he included Mirpur), Jammu, and the Gilgit Agency He believed that these four areas would have to be given a very large measure of autonomy since they had very little in common between their peoples This autonomy would automatically involve the people of the district concerned being recruited for local police, levies and services, and to this extent he felt that Mr Liaquat Ali's wishes would be met

Mr Liaquat Ali Khan agreed that that would be so if it were done soon enough He pointed out to Pandit Nehru that Sheikh Abdullah might have and in fact probably did have very great influence in the valley of Srinagar, but so far as he knew he had little influence in Jammu and was cordially detested in Poonch and Gilgit "You will not get one single vote in favour of Sheikh Abdullah or the Indian Dominion in these two areas

and I doubt if you will get many in Jammu unless Sheikh Abdullah is able to put in his people and bring improper pressure to bear "

(After we had left the room Pandit Nehru drew my attention to the fact that Mr Liaquat Ali Khan's acceptance of Sheikh Abdullah's hold over Kashmir proper exposed the dishonesty of his telegram to Mr Attlee denouncing Abdullah as a quisling)

I then told Mr Liaquat Ali that Pandit Nehru had not yet sent his telegram to Mr Attlee, but that I had his permission to reveal that it would be friendly and very different in its tone from Mr Liaquat Ali's Pandit Nehru enlarged on this and said that although he was unable to accept a single point in Mr Liaquat Ali's telegram which had both hurt and annoyed him almost beyond endurance, and although the temptation to send an equally strongly worded telegram to Mr Attlee was very great, he now proposed to draft a friendly telegram as a gesture of the new spirit of goodwill Mr Liaquat Ali expressed his appreciation at this gesture

(I asked Pandit Nehru on the way out to show me the draft telegram before he sent it to Mr Attlee, he agreed)

I then raised, with Mr Liaquat Ali, Mr Jinnah's telegram, and told him that I had arranged to hand him a letter before he left giving my reply and asking him, in giving it to Mr Jinnah, to convey a verbal message that I trusted that this would now close this episode

Mr Liaquat Ali pointed out that Mr Jinnah's complaint was that I had neither fulfilled my promise to send him the views of my Government on his proposals, nor got my Government to send him a telegram.

I pointed out to Mr Liaquat Ali that Lord Ismay and I were both quite positive that I had not only not given Mr Jinnah such an undertaking but had refused to telegraph to him as it would be unconstitutional, and that all I promised to do was to send my Prime Minister a full account of the meeting.

This I had immediately done.

Pandit Nehru admitted receiving a ten or twelve page account of the meeting, but said he had not appreciated that there were specific proposals to which he had to reply, since he had noted that I had countered most of the proposals which involved my going to Kashmir with Mr Jinnah, to stop the fighting and my joining with him to hold the plebiscite, by pointing out that this would be quite unconstitutional and that I myself would never accept it Finally Pandit Nehru and I together pointed out to Mr Liaquat Ali that after Pandit Nehru's broadcast he sent Mr Liaquat Ali a telegram saying that this broadcast represented his Government's views Mr Liaquat Ali was of the opinion that this telegram was not sent until he had sent one himself asking for the Indian world (?) views, but Pandit Nehru was emphatic that he had sent it well before the receipt of Mr Liaquat Ali's telegram

In the course of the conversation we all three cordially agreed that the future of the whole sub-continent depended on goodwill being restored between India and Pakistan and we once more reiterated our belief that an early discussion on overall joint defence plans against external aggression would be one of the most practical and constructive steps to this end We expressed the hope that this might lead on to understanding over other matters which would gradually bring the two Dominions closer together without sacrificing their independent sovereignty

●●●

I asked Mr Liaquat Ali Khan if he was now happy that India was not meddling in frontier affairs. Mr Liaquat Ali said he was perfectly satisfied that Pandit Nehru had nothing to do with it, though he was *not* so certain that things were not being done behind his back Pandit Nehru ridiculed this idea

Finally, we discussed the question of the next meeting in

Lahore, and Mr Liaquat Ali begged us to spend the night there when we came, since he readily pointed out that it was in the social atmosphere of the evening that friendly and profitable business could be done

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with Mr V P Menon and General Lockhart on December 3, 1947

After the Defence Committee Meeting on December 3, His Excellency kept back Mr V P. Menon and General Lockhart. He explained to them that he had had no alternative at the meeting but to moderate his opposition to the idea of a protective zone being established along a ten mile wide strip next to the boundary of Kashmir with West Punjab, in which any observed movement would be attacked from the air He had not been able flatly to contradict the views so very strongly held by his Ministers He had therefore arranged for the project to be examined by the Joint Planning Staff

His Excellency drew attention to the very serious repercussions likely to result from the establishment of such a zone. This step would probably once and for all do away with any hope of an agreement being successfully concluded with Pakistan He suggested to General Lockhart the lines upon which the practicability of the idea could be challenged

His Excellency then pointed out that the meeting which had just finished had been one of the most disastrous in recent weeks The Indian Ministers appeared to have undergone a complete change of outlook, mainly owing to Sardar Patel's and Sardar Baldev Singh's visit the previous day to Jammu It had been most unfortunate that Mr Menon had at this critical stage gone away for two days to visit Indore and Bhopal It was equally unfortunate that Mr Mohammed Ali had left Delhi

that morning

After discussing ways and means of obtaining the co-operation of the Prime Minister Pakistan towards measures to improve the atmosphere once again, His Excellency decided that Lt Col Erskine Crum should fly up to Lahore the following day and put the case fully before Mr Mohammed Ali The object of this visit would be to induce the Prime Minister of Pakistan to issue a statement calling upon the raiders not to continue their attacks during the period in which negotiations were attacks in progress or failing this to send a conciliatory telegram to Pandit Nehru

The Governor-General then drew General Lockhart's attention to the fact that General Russell had gone on a tour of Kashmir This was surely in contravention of the statement made in the House of Commons by the Secretary of State to the effect that no British officer would take part in the Kashmir fighting.

Top Secret

Record of Governor General's Interview with Pandit Nehru Sardar Baldev Singh, Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar, Mr Liaquat Ali Khan and Mr Ghulam Mohd at Government House, Lahore, on December 8, 1947

H E opened the discussion by emphasizing that the whole future welfare of India depended on an agreement over Kashmir being reached between the two Dominions The effect that such an agreement would have on world opinion would also be very great Unfortunately, since the last meeting between the two Prime Ministers on the subject at Delhi some ten days previously, events had occurred which had produced a set back in the outlook of both sides to the problem He invited both Prime Ministers to give their opinion as to how matters now stood

Pandit Nehru started by pointing out that, whatever might happen in the future, as the result of a plebiscite, Kashmir was at the present time part of the territory of India Invaders had come into Kashmir through Pakistan territory In his view, they had undoubtedly been assisted by persons in authority in Pakistan There had been no attempt at an open disavowal by the Pakistan Government, of this Regular soldiers of the Pakistan army, and equipment supplied by that army, had been captured in Kashmir There were concentrations of regular and irregular forces in Pakistan territory, close to the borders of Kashmir This all really amounted to nothing less than an act of war—and as such it had been treated by newspapers in Pakistan, which talked of the Indian troops as "the enemy" The present position was an impossible one, it must move either one way or the other

Pandit Nehru said that he freely admitted that there had been atrocities on both sides. But during the last month there had been very few, if any, on the Indian side—in fact it was a physical impossibility that there could have been more than a very small number On the side of the raiders, however, there had been, and continued to be, large-scale looting, destruction, massacre and abduction of women It was the duty of India to fight the invasion until Kashmir was free of invaders The first step, before there was talk of a plebiscite or anything else, must be the withdrawal of the raiders

Mr Liaquat Ali Khan said that he did not accept the view that the recent atrocities had been one-sided. Many thousands of Muslims had been killed in Jammu—some while being evacuated from there Many incidents had occurred since Kashmir had acceded to India In particular, some women of good families had been abducted, taken back to Jammu, and there kept naked and raped

Pandit Nehru said that the last attack on Muslims being evacuated from Jammu had taken place on November 5—over a

month previously This had happened before Indian forces had arrived in Jammu and restored the situation Apart from this one incident, very few Muslims had been killed since the accession Calculations made by subtracting the number of refugees who had arrived in Pakistan from the census population of Muslims did not hold water There will still be a large number of Muslims in Jammu, including some in the local Home Guard Every effort was being made, and would continue to be made, to recover abducted women Any specific incidents on which information was provided would be energetically investigated.

Mr Liaquat Ali Khan said that it was very difficult for the Government of Pakistan to provide such detailed information.

At H E 's suggestion, both Prime Ministers agreed that two teams, each consisting of a high-class representative of each Dominion, should be formed to tout both sides investigating the truth of the various reports that were received of atrocities and other incidents

Mr Liaquat Ali Khan then drew a parallel between events in Junagadh and those in Kashmir He reminded Pandit Nehru of how India had recognized the "sanctity" of Junagadh territory. The "Provisional Government" of Junagadh had been set up in Indian territory it had been provided with arms by India, and then invaded and captured territory belonging to Junagadh The Head of the "Provisional Government" had made a public statement saying that its success was due to the assistance which had been provided by the Deputy Prime Minister of India

Pandit Nehru, while openly admitting that India had been in some ways in the wrong about Junagadh, claimed that the parallel with Kashmir was not tenable because of the vast difference in scale between the two

Pandit Nehru pointed out that many of the raiders who had come into Kashmir were armed with modern weapons, including some which had been issued by Pakistan ordnance depots. He could produce proof that the NWFP Government *had help-*

ed to arm the raiders, and given them every other sort of assistance.

His Excellency stated that General Messervy had categorically assured him that the Pakistan army had not issued arms to the raiders—on the contrary, orders had been given that this was not to be done General Messervy had also told him that there might be a few Pakistan soldiers on leave taking part in the Kashmir fighting

Mr Liaquat Ali Khan said that there were 300,000 armed people on the frontier This fact had been put on record by the ex-Supreme Commander They had arms factories of their own, which produced first-class weapons Some Pakistan army rifles might have been taken by soldiers on leave Mr Ghulam Mohd said that the raiders also obtained arms from Afghanistan and Russia

Pandit Nehru said that he considered that Pakistan territory was being used as a major base for operations against Kashmir Mr Ghulam Mohd replied that many of the stories which were being circulated, and which might have led to this belief, were not true But the feeling of the people of Pakistan with regard to Kashmir was very strong They realized its strategic and economic importance to Pakistan They felt that India's action in Kashmir was planned to encircle and strangle Pakistan. Pandit Nehru said that this feeling was not, in his opinion, spontaneous It had been whipped up by the whole administration of, and in particular the Premier of, the NWFP

Pandit Nehru also claimed that Pakistan must be supplying petrol for the raiders' vehicles This Mr Liaquat Ali Khan denied He said that the vehicles had been given to the tribes before partition by the British, and drew their petrol allowance in the normal way

Mr Gopalaswamy Ayyangar said that he took it that the Pakistan Government was now ready to admit that raiders had passed through Pakistan territory Did Pakistan recognize it as

its duty, as a country having an international existence, to stop these raiders? Or did Pakistan disown all responsibility?

Mr Liaquat Ali Khan replied that he could not stop them. Any effort to do so would mean going to war with the tribes, which he was not prepared to do As it was, the Government of Pakistan was under continual attack by the people for the attitude they had taken in regard to Kashmir However, the Government of Pakistan had not recognised the accession of Kashmir to India The murders of the Muslims in Kashmir had been the cause of the tribesmen attacking These had been started with incursions of Akali Sikhs and RSSS bands

Sardar Baldev Singh said that this claim reminded him of the story that Narinjan Singh Gill was about to invade Lahore with 10,000 men The truth was that Gill could not raise more than five followers from his own village

Pandit Nehru then gave a description of past history in Pakistan from his point of view According to this, the Kashmir troubles had started with incursions from Pakistan

Mr Ghulam Mohd then turned the conversation to the feeling of the people of Kashmir itself—particularly the feeling of the Poonchis, who had rebelled against the Maharaja's Government. He appealed to Pandit Nehru, as an ex-rebel, to appreciate the point of view of these rebels

The meeting next considered the basic policy of either Government with regard to Kashmir The representatives of each Government were agreed that the ultimate aim must be to hold a fair plebiscite, whereby the will of the people could be ascertained as to which Dominion the State should accede to There was, however, a fundamental difference as to what should be the first step forward towards achieving this object The Indian representatives claimed that it must be a declaration by the Pakistan Government that it would do its utmost to influence the raiders at present n Kashmir to withdraw, and to stop any further raiders going in The Pakistan representatives claimed

that an essential prerequisite to this action was a declaration by India that Indian troops would be withdrawn and that there would be an impartial administration in the period preceding the plebiscite

Mr Liaquat Ali Khan said that, once this assurance had been given Pakistan would use the utmost force to ensure the withdrawal of the invaders

Pandit Nehru said that it was out of the question that Indian troops should be altogether withdrawn The Indian troops were disciplined, they would obey orders, Pakistan could not control the irregulars If all the Indian troops were withdrawn Kashmir would be at the mercy of the armed men of Poonch If they remained, he guaranteed that the Poonchis themselves would be free of harassment—nothing was further from his mind than to send punitive parties against them

His Excellency pointed out that the only Indian troops at present in the Poonch area were those engaged in protecting 45,000 non-Muslims in the city of Poonch itself

Mr Ghulam Mohd. said that the only practicable way of getting the raiders out was to have a change of administration If this was done, Pakistan would do all in their power to withdraw the raiders

Mr Liaquat Ali Khan said that he had discussed the draft agreement with the Azad Kashmir Government, who had said that they could not accept it in view of what had happened under the present administration. In the Kashmir Valley, no Muslim could be a member of the Muslim Conference without being arrested or at the least victimized

Pandit Nehru pointed out that, if these Muslim Conference members were aiding and abetting the raiders, as they were known to be, the only way of dealing with them was to lock them up It was out of the question that the administration should be changed

H.E pointed out that there was provision in the draft agree-

ment for all political prisoners to be released prior to the plebiscite He also stressed the point that, if a UNO delegation was in Kashmir preparing for the plebiscite, it would be approachable by all parties, who would be able to lay before it their various complaints

Pandit Nehru then took the line that the Government of India had already gone far further than they need have done They had gone out of their way to offer a plebiscite There was no necessity for them to have done this Now they were told that they must change the administration!

Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar backed this up by saying that he wondered whether it was realized how unpopular the Government of India had become, both in Kashmir and India, on account of their pledge that there would be free and impartial plebiscite How could they now order the administration to be changed? There was no precedent for such a suggestion

Mr Liaquat Ali Khan brought up the change of Governors in the NWFP as an example of how an administration could be changed before a plebiscite H E explained the full circumstances which had led to Sir Rob Lockhart taking over from Sir Olaf Caroe

Mr Ghulam Mohd again said that the essential prerequisite was an immediate promise of an impartial plebiscite—either a coalition, or someone from neither main political party

Pandit Nehru pointed out that the plebiscite would take some time to prepare—especially if, as both sides agreed, it was to be conducted on adult franchise During the intervening period of six months, or whatever it might be, there must be an administration of some sort The present administration had done three great things—it had stopped the fighting in the area which it controlled, it had knit the people together on non-communal lines, it was the first fully responsible government which had ever been set up in Kashmir overthrowing the Maharaja's autocratic rule—(which,incidentally, had been supported at one

stage by the Muslim Conference) It would be fatal to upset it. He could see that circumstances might arise in which a coalition would be possible But that question did not arise at the present time The right conditions must first be brought about. Anyway, it was not for the Government of India, but for the people of the State themselves, to decide upon the form of government

Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar gave his view that, if a coalition was put in at the present time, there would be grave risks of communal trouble in both Kashmir and Jammu The great merit of the present administration was that it had brought communities together

Mr Ghulam Mohd said that he was sure that a coalition would not result in communal trouble He also said that a "fully responsible government" presupposed an election or plebiscite. It could not come before

Mr Liaquat Ali Khan then gave his view that the people of Kashmir were bound to vote, in the plebiscite, in favour of whatever administration was then in power The Kashmiris were an illiterate and oppressed people, and they would be bound to favour the authority in possession. If an Englishman went as Administrator, they would vote to join the United Kingdom!

His Excellency suggested that the call of Islam would surely have a much greater influence upon the people of Kashmir Religion was a factor of great importance among the illiterate Also, the difficulties facing the present administration were so great that he would be amazed if it retained its hold on the people

His Excellency then suggested that the two Governments might at least make a joint statement agreeing that all possible steps should be taken to stop the massacres in Kashmir and restore abducted women

This suggestion met with no response from either side

His Excellency suggested that the Government of India should put out a unilateral statement, on the lines of the draft agree-

ment The policy of India at least would then be clear to the world, and it might help Pakistan to induce the raiders to withdraw

Pandit Nehru replied that he would not make such a unilateral statement The question of a plebiscite in Kashmir did not arise until the raiders were thrown out The first task must be to clear the State of outside elements If necessary, he would throw up his Prime Ministership and take the sword himself, and lead the men of India against the invasion Nothing else in India mattered until Kashmir was cleared up—though it might take five years or ten

His Excellency suggested that UNO should be asked to send out observers or advisers in some capacity to the two Dominions solve the impasse which had been reached The UNO representatives could hold meetings with the two Prime Ministers They could discuss the draft agreement and ways and means of implementing it They could set up a committee consisting of the principal contending parties in Kashmir Would the two Governments agree to making a joint approach to UNO or that one or other should make the approach?

Mr Liaquat Ali Khan said that he would agree to UNO advising on the impartiality of the administration before the plebiscite

Pandit Nehru said that he would entirely reject this idea. Only when hostilities had ceased was he prepared to ask UNO to send representatives for the plebiscite The plebiscite only came into the picture when peace was restored

His Excellency then pointed out that not one constructive suggestion had been put forward by either party at this meeting, and those which he had put forward had been turned down out of hand by one or the other If no agreement was reached, if no way out of the present impasse was found, the fighting, would go on It was not the political leaders who would suffer in this fighting, but the humble people of Kashmir But their blood

would be on the heads of these leaders They would be responsible for all the misery that would result not only in Kashmir itself but also throughout the sub-continent. Here were the two Dominions, who should now be settling down to formulate plans for the betterment of the lot of their people, unable to reach any sort of agreement after almost five hours' discussion. History would judge them harshly

His Excellency's final suggestion was that a joint statement should be put out in which the Government of Pakistan would undertake to do their best to induce the raiders to withdraw and no further raiders to go in, and the Government of India would undertake to call in UNO advisers straightaway

Immediately after dinner, His Excellency saw Mr Liaquat Ali Khan alone In the course of this interview, Mr Liaquat Ali Khan made it clear that it was fully within his power to agree to issuing a statement calling upon the tribes to withdraw straightaway If he did so, however, without being able to make one concrete offer in return his appeal would be taken no notice of Not only would it be a dishonest thing to do, and as much lead to further deterioration between the two Dominions, but it would also result in such a deterioration of the position of the Government of Pakistan vis-a-vis its own people that the very existence of that Government would be endangered.

His Excellency asked whether he could count on Mr Liaquat Ali Khan's full support to the proposal that UNO should be brought in, whatever form this might be This Mr Liaquat Ali Khan undertook to do

The full meeting then reassembled, with the addition of Mr Mohammed Ali and Mr H M Patel The agreement which had been reached between the officials on the allocation of defence expenditure after August 15 was first taken and confirmed A draft statement on the settlement of outstanding financial and economic issues was then considered This was agreed, with minor changes, but considerable pressure had to be exerted by

His Excellency on Pandit Nehru before he would agree that it should be published the following afternoon

His Excellency then described the talk which he had had with Mr Liaquat Ali Khan before the meeting Nearly all the rest of the time was devoted to efforts to induce Pandit Nehru to accept a reference to UNO

Pandit Nehru was extremely adamant He went to the extremity of saying that he intended to clear Kashmir with the sword, whatever happened He asked under what section of the Charter any reference to UNO could be made He asked how Pakistan came into the picture at all He reiterated his insistence that the first step was to drive out the raiders

His Excellency drew attention to the great benefits an approach to UNO would have It was the only way to solve the present impasse, and stop the fighting—and to stop the fighting was the main thing at the moment

Mr Liaquat Ali Khan reiterated that he would not mind in what manner the approach to UNO was made He would even agree that it should be in the form of an accusation by India that Pakistan was assisting the raiders He agreed with His Excellency that the first thing that the UNO Commission would probably do would be to ask Pakistan to use their influence to withdraw the raiders and stop further influxes In these circumstances, his own position would be so immensely strengthened that he would be able to issue the appeal with impunity

The position, as finally left, was that Pandit Nehru should examine the UNO Charter and see if there was any way in which he could agree to a reference being made

Immediately on return to Delhi, His Excellency saw Mr V P. Menon and told him the whole story of the Lahore meetings He enlisted his support to persuade Sardar Patel to come out in favour of the UNO idea, if possible the first time he saw Pandit Nehru on his return Mr Menon whilst fully agreeing with His Excellency's views on this matter, was not fully confident that he

would be able to bring Sardar Patel round

Top Secret

Record of Governor General's Interviews The Series of Meetings Between the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan on December 21 and 22, 1947

Mr Liaquat Ali Khan, December 21

Mr Liaquat Ali Khan, accompanied by the Pakistan JDC delegation, arrived to stay at Government House at 6 P M on Sunday, December 21 I had originally suggested that Pandit Nehru should come to see him as soon as Mr Liaquat Ali Khan arrived but when I came in from a motor drive, I discovered that they had mutually agreed not to meet until after dinner

I went up to greet Mr Liaquat Ali, and, although I do not usually have separate lengthy talks with him, we drifted into a conversation which lasted about an hour In the course of this he poured out his heart to me about the difficult situation with which Pakistan was faced I told him what the point of view of my Government about Kashmir was, and what I thought Pandit Nehru would probably say to him

I told him that, although I still favoured a joint agreed approach to UNO to deal with the whole subject, I was fairly certain that the most we could expect at this stage from Pandit Nehru would be an approach to the Security Council by India, inviting their investigation of Pakistan's complicity in the tribal war

Mr Liaquat Ali urged that the appeal to UNO to stop the fighting should also be linked up with an assurance that UNO would immediately set about preparing for a fair and impartial plebiscite I told him that I would speak further to Pandit Nehru about this, and that we would give [illegible] that night.

Mr Liaquat Ali then asked me specifically whether the rumours which had reached him, that India intended to repudiate the recently reached financial agreements between the two Dominions, were true I told him I had heard nothing officially about this, but would enquire from my Prime Minister

Pandit Nehru, December 21

Pandit Nehru arrived at 10 P M and for half an hour I talked to him alone I told him that he would find Mr Liaquat Ali Khan in a very chastened mood, since he obviously was frightened at the situation, which appeared to me to be getting out of his control I thought he would accept any appeal to UNO in order to break the impasse and bring the fighting to an end, although his desire was to link the plebiscite with the appeal to cease fighting Pandit Nehru said that this was out of the question, that the Government of India would never agree to this, and that he intended to tell Mr Liaquat Ali Khan so I begged him to let me explain this in a quiet and tactful manner, for I felt I would probably get him to accept it provided it were not done in a provocative way

I told Pandit Nehru that Mr Liaquat Ali Khan was most anxious to know whether it was intended to repudiate the payment of the balances due to Pakistan or to delay them until a settlement was reached on Kashmir Pandit Nehru said that there was no question of repudiation and that India meant to stand by her obligations in this matter, though the date of payment was one which the Cabinet had not yet settled, as they were waiting to find out how matters were going to turn out in Kashmir I begged him not to mention this latter fact to Mr Liaquat Ali Khan, since I considered that we could never get any agreement with him under undue pressure, and that, so far from this factor being helpful, I considered it would wreck the prospect of any settlement He agreed with this

Pandit Nehru and Mr Liaquat Ali Khan, December 21

We then went up together to see Mr Liaquat Ali about 10.30 P M I did all the talking for the first quarter of an hour in order to smooth over the tense feeling which was clearly present between the two Prime Ministers

I began by reassuring Mr Liaquat Ali Khan that India had no intention of repudiating the financial agreements, I turned towards Pandit Nehru for confirmation, and he nodded his head I pointed out that the precise date of implementation was a matter that could be discussed the following day, but reiterated that India would consider herself to be bound by this agreement as much as if it had been settled by the Arbitral Tribunal

Having temporarily moved aside this greatest obstacle to any progress, I then proceeded to enlarge on how necessary it was to bring in UNO at the earliest possible moment to stop the fighting I told Mr Liaquat Ali Khan that I had conveyed to Pandit Nehru his insistence that, once UNO was brought in, it should deal with the whole problem of Kashmir, including the supervision of the plebiscite, and that Pandit Nehru had replied that the immediate appeal to bring about the cessation of the fighting could only be made to the Security Council, and that the Security Council was not competent to deal with the plebiscite I pointed out that Pandit Nehru had accepted the fact that the discussions on the plebiscite, and the calling in of the UNO team for the plebiscite, would be logical consequences of the stopping of the fighting Mr Liaquat Ali Khan said that this was far from what he had hoped, but, if Pandit Nehru was sincere in his declared intention to proceed with a fair and impartial plebiscite by UNO, he supposed he would have to accept it

Pandit Nehru reassured Mr Liaquat Ali that the Government of India would never depart from the policy of holding a fair and impartial plebiscite under UNO, and that indeed they had declared this policy too often and too publicly to make it possi-

ble for them to withdraw from it, even if they wanted to, which they did not The two Prime Ministers discussed verious detailed allegations and counter- allegations, and agreed to meet again the following day at 5 30 P.M

Pandit Nehru, Sardar Patel, Sardar Baldev Singh, Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar, and Mr H M Patel, December 22

After the Joint Defence Council on December 22, I kept back the Prime Minister, the Defence Minister, and Mr H M. Patel (as a member of the Steering Committee), and I telephoned for the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister Without Portfolio We held an informal meeting in my study

I told the meeting that Mr Liaquat Ali Khan was extremely exercised over the rumours he had heard that India intended to repudiate the financial settlement recently reached between the two Dominions. There was a chorus of denial from all the Ministers Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar said, "You may tell Mr Liaquat Ali Khan that we regard this settlement by agreement to be just as binding as a settlement by the Arbitral Tribunal "

I then tried to persuade the meeting to lift the embargo on the date of implementation I pointed out that, if indeed it was the view of the Cabinet that the settlement by agreement was as binding as an arbitral award, then the Rs 55 crores belonged so Pakistan from the date of the settlement, and that, if we held on to these funds, we should be holding on to funds which by our own admission belonged to Pakistan

Sardar Patel pointed out that the financial settlement had not been well received by the House or by the country, that from the very beginning it had been intended to tie all the agreements together, and that he had in fact given, in the Assembly, a warning to this effect I told the meeting that I thought that it was a mistake to hold on to funds which did not belong to us, and that, if by so doing, it were hoped to bring pressure on Pakistan, I was convinced it would have the opposite effect

Sardar Patel said that it was not intended to bring pressure to bear The only reason for holding up implementation was because the country would never stand for India handing over money to Pakistan to be used to prosecute a war against Dominion troops in Kashmir

Finally, Pandit Nehru pointed out that there had been a Cabinet decision on this matter, and that it would require a meeting of the Cabinet to reverse this decision

Mr Mohammed Ali, December 22

I saw Mr Mohammed Ali at lunch, and broke this news to him He was frightfully worried, and he said that the Government of India's action would have precisely the reverse effect to what they hoped He was certain that the Government of Pakistan would fall if they were to make an appeal to the tribes under conditions which could make it appear that the appeal was only launched in order to obtain Rs 55 crores from India Thus, quite apart from a unilateral repudiation of the agreement being involved, any prospect of Pakistan appealing to the tribes to come out and stop the war would be rendered impossible, since the Pakistan Government would be immediately accused of having accepted Rs 55 crores to call off the tribes.

He admitted that Pakistan was in a very serious financial, situation and that they had practically used up their original 20 crores; but he said that he knew that all Pakistan Government servants and even officers would do without their pay whilst they were raising a loan elsewhere

I asked him where he expected to raise a loan, considering that I understood the Nizam to have refused one recently He admitted that this was true, but pointed out that a Government could always raise money

I suggested that we should postpone a decision on the date of implementing the financial agreements until the next meeting of the Prime Ministers on January 5 Mr Mohammed Ali was still

very upset about this, but said he would try and persuade Mr Liaquat Ali to accept this position

Pandit Nehru, Mr Liaquat Ali Khan, Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar and Mr Mohammed Ali, December 22

I first asked Mr Mohammed Ali whether he had spoken to Mr Liaquat Ali Khan on the lines which I had suggested He said regretfully that he had been unable to do this This undoubtedly added to the difficulty of this meeting It meant that I had to break the news to Mr Liaquat Ali Khan

I started off by assuring Mr Liaquat Ali Khan that there was no question but that it was the intention of the Ministers of the Government of India completely to honour the financial agreements which had been reached It was, however, difficult for them to agree that the date of implementing these agreements should be decided now, because of the statement which Sardar Patel had made in the Legislature linking them with a settlement of the Kashmir issue I read out an extract from this statement, which had been made on December 9

Mr Liaquat Ali Khan said that he considered that it was wrong of Sardar Patel to have gone beyond the agreed statement on the financial settlements, which had been issued simultaneously in India and Pakistan He pointed out that he was not in any way bound by this addition which Sardar Patel had made

I stated that I had previously made the suggestion that Pakistan's share of the cash balances should be transferred on the day on which the Pakistan Government issued an appeal recalling the tribes from Kashmir I said that Mr Mohammed Ali had explained to me that Pakistan could never agree to this, because they would be accused of having "sold out", for the sum of Rs 55 crores I therefore now proposed that the question of the date of implementation should be postponed for consideration at the next meeting between the Prime Ministers

Mr Liaquat Ali Khan said that he saw no connection between

the implementation of the financial agreements and the Kashmir issue If India did not intend to abide by the financial agreements which had been made, it would be better to go to the Arbitral Tribunal now Say there was a hitch on some issue at a later stage; would he then be justified in repudiating Pakistan's share of the uncovered debt? He was unable to accept the position whereby he was put under pressure over the Kashmir settlement An impression was being given that there was one-sided generosity, on the part of India, in "giving" Pakistan Rs 55 crores This was not the case Pakistan had accepted their fair share of the liabilities

I repeated that none of the Indian Ministers had suggested that there was any intention to repudiate the agreements All regarded them as just as binding as if a decision had been given by the Arbitral Tribunal The date was the only matter which remained for decision I again suggested that this should be left until the next meeting between the two Prime Ministers

Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar pointed out that, when the discussions towards solving all outstanding difficulties had started, the idea had been to smooth out the lot It was the desire of the Government of India that they should all be settled before they were individually implemented

Pandit Nehru recalled that I had, at one of the earliest of the previous series of meetings held at Delhi between the Prime Ministers, read out a note expressing my Government's policy that all the agreements should hang together He said that he considered the present situation to be tantamount to undeclared war, in which, in the opinion of the Government of India, Pakistan was encouraging the aggressors It was not the question to hand over large funds to Pakistan in these circumstances

Mr Liaquat Ali Khan pointed out that these funds did not in any way belong to India, they were Pakistan's legal share of the cash balances It was not a question of a loan or a gift being made He considered that they should be handed

over straightaway

Mr Mohammed Ali made the point that all the financial agreements had been made on their own merits With this Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar agreed, but gave his view that the whole background in reaching these agreements had been the intention to reach an overall settlement

I asked to what extent the action of making a reference to UNO could be taken as a detente to stop the fighting and lead to a decision to implement the financial agreements

Pandit Nehru did not answer this Instead he said that the fighting was taking place on Indian Dominion territory, which had been attacked He said (though this was on the spur of the moment and rather a hurried remark) that he admitted that the delay in implementing the financial agreements was a method of bringing pressure against the Pakistan Government. But this was not the main pressure that was being brought to bear The military pressure, which was in reply to aggressive military pressure against Indian territory, was of greater import

This gave Mr Liaquat Ali Khan the opportunity to point out that he did not recognize Kashmir as Indian Dominion territory —in exactly the same way as Indian did not recognize Junagadh as Pakistan territory These remarks did not improve the atmosphere of the meeting

I then emphasized that the agreement to make a reference on Kashmir to UNO had been reached the previous evening before the question of the date of implementing the financial agreements arose Therefore, there was no question of pressure having been applied to Pakistan in order to make them agree to this procedure

Pandit Nehru reiterated that the reference which he intended to make to UNO would be on the question of whether or not Pakistan had supported the aggression against Kashmir All the evidence which was available to him showed that they had supported this to a most serious degree

Pandit Nehru then handed to Mr Liaquat Ali Khan the letter, which represented the first step in making a reference to UNO Mr Liaquat Ali Khan was in such a bitter mood that he first said that he did not wish to open or read this letter But he subsequently repented, read it through, and undertook to send a reply as soon as possible—after he had consulted his Government I suggested that Pandit Nehru should draft the formal application to UNO without waiting for Mr Liaquat Ali Khan's reply, so that this could be despatched with the least possible delay Mr Liaquat Ali Khan then returned to the question of the implementation of the financial agreements, concerning which he confessed that he was very bitter. He said that he regarded the delay in implementation as equal to, if not worse than, repudiation He would indeed have preferred complete repudiation

Mr Mohammed Ali made further reference to the financial position of Pakistan The Rs 20 crores which had been made available to them before August 15 were now nearing exhaustion However, leaving aside all other possible sources of raising cash, there was no question at all of Pakistan running out of funds Therefore, there was no question of pressure being applied in India's delay in making available Pakistan's share of the cash balances He repeated his opinion that the attitude of the Government of India was not helping towards a settlement of the Kashmir issue, but rather the opposite It was "putting up the backs" of the Pakistan Government

To this Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar replied that the assistance which Pakistan was giving to the raiders was "putting up the backs" of the Indian Ministers to a far greater extent

Pandit Nehru then weighed-in with the remarks which I had hoped that he would refrain from making He said that the normal military action for India would be to hit out at the concentrations of raiders, their bases and supply lines (which were, of course, situated in Pakistan territory) However, the Government of India wished to avoid any action which was likely to

lead to war, and was restraining itself Nevertheless, it was an impossible position that a territory which should be friendly was being used as a base for operations In his view the situation would now either improve rapidly, or deteriorate rapidly He advocated that all concerned should now work for rapid improvement, the rest would follow

I suggested that no publicity of any kind should be given either to the proposed reference to UNO or to the question of the date of implementing the financial agreements With this Pandit Nehru agreed Mr Liaquat Ali Khan agreed with the first point, but not with the second He said that he wished to reserve his position with regard to publicity over the implementation of the financial agreements

Top Secret

New Delhi
December 22, 1947

The Hon'ble Mr Liaquat Ali Khan,
Prime Minister of Pakistan

Dear Mr Liaquat Ali Khan,

On various occasions, I have drawn your attention to the aid which the invaders of the Jammu and Kashmir State are deriving from Pakistan Those who come from tribal areas have free transit through Pakistan territory, and many of these invaders are nationals of Pakistan They are operating against Kashmir from bases in Pakistan Much of their modern military equipment has been obtained from Pakistan sources, mortars, artillery and Mark-V mines are not normally the kind of armament which tribesmen or civilians possess Motor transport, which the invaders have been using, and the petrol required for it, could also be obtained in Pakistan only Food and other supplies are also secured from Pakistan, indeed, we have reliable reports that

the invaders get their rations from military messes in Pakistan. According to our information, large numbers of these invaders are receiving military training in Pakistan under officers of the Pakistan army and other Pakistan nationals

2 The forms of aid, enumerated in the preceding paragraph, which the invaders are receiving, constitute an act of hostility and aggression against India because they are being used against a State which has acceded to the Indian Dominion and is a part thereof

3 The Government of India, while protesting against the action of the Pakistan Government in furnishing or allowing such assistance to be furnished, and urging that the Pakistan Government should stop such help and call upon the invaders to withdraw, have so far taken no action which might involve entry by Indian forces into Pakistan territory They have been hoping, all these weeks, though with diminishing hope, that the Pakistan Government themselves would put a stop to aid to the invaders which is help to India's enemies Since protests have failed to bear fruit, the Government of India now formally ask the Government of Pakistan to call upon Pakistan nationals to cease participation in the attack on Jammu and Kashmir State, and to deny to the invaders

(i) all access to and use of Pakistan territory for operations against Kashmir State,
(ii) all military and other supplies,
(iii) all other kinds of aid that might tend to prolong the present struggle

4 The Government of India have always desired and still earnestly desire to live on terms of friendship with Pakistan They sincerely hope that the request which they have now formally made will be acceded to promptly and without reserve Failing such response, they will be compelled to take such action, with due regard to their rights and obligations as a member of the United Nations, as they may consider necessary to protect

their own interests, and those of the Government and people of Jammu and Kashmir State

Yours sincerely,
(Sd) JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with Mr V P Menon on December 27, 1947

H E. held a small meeting at 1 P M on Saturday, December 27, at which Mr V P Menon as well as Captain Brockman, Mr Campbell-Johnson and Lt -Col Erskine Crum were present

The Prime Minister's answer to H E 's letter about Kashmir policy was discussed Mr Menon said that H E 's letter had been considered at a meeting held by the Prime Minister at which Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Patel and Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar were present All present at that meeting fully agreed with the point of view that the main object now was to stop the fighting, but were, as stated in the Prime Minister's reply, bitterly opposed to any step which could be taken as meaning surrender They had also all made flattering reference to H E whose own position had not deteriorated in any way by his writing this letter, which they all realised had been sent with nothing but the good of India in mind

Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar said that he did not think that, from his letter, H E appreciated fully enough the Indian point of view Mahatma Gandhi had replied that it only appeared from the letter that this was so, and that H E was over-emphasizing the Pakistan point of view, he was sure that H E fully appreciated India's position

H E pointed out the immediate danger of an attack on the Indian positions at Uri If this was successful, it might well go

through to Baramula and even to Srinagar The effects of such a victory by the raiders would be far-reaching, and might well precipitate the despatch of Indian troops into West Punjab

H E gave the outline of a telegram which he wished to be sent through the United Kingdom High Commissioner to Mr Attlee He also dictated a letter to Pandit Nehru suggested that he should now send a full telegram to Mr Attlee Both these telegrams were subsequently despatched

Record of Governor-General's Interview with the Prime Minister of India on December 31, 1947

Pandit Nehru asked me what I thought of the appeal to UNO. I congratulated him on this, and said I thought it was a masterly draft, but I regretted that it included the statement that India reserved the right to take direct action in Pakistan territory if this proved necessary I pointed out that psychologically this could not help offending the members of the Security Council for they would be bound to feel that it was a form of threat "If you don't jolly well hurry up, we will take the law into our own hands "

Pandit Nehru assured me that this was far from the impression they wished to convey, and he was confident that UNO would act quickly without this

I asked him whether he had briefed our representative at UNO on the need for speed He replied that he thought it was quite apparent from all the telegrams, and he was convinced they would do everything in their power to act quickly

I told him that I thought that Mr Attlee's telegram showed that the UK representative would also bring pressure to bear for speed

The Prime Minister told me how very upset he had been that in spite of immense precautions of secrecy to ensure that no news of the appeal o UNO leaked to the press before UNO

itself released the information from New York, this had in fact appeared in full in all the papers that morning.

I told him that I thought that this was most unfortunate, and had been surprised to read it in the papers. He assured me that everyone in the Cabinet had realised the great need for secrecy, and that nobody outside the Cabinet Ministers, the Cabinet Secretariat and a few trusted officials had known about it except for the acting High Commissioner for the UK and his Secretary whom he did not suspect.

I told the Prime Minister that he should either appoint the equivalent of a Royal Commission to investigate this leakage and really stamp on it once and for all, or alternatively, that he should consider introducing the "D Notice method" used in the UK during the war. I explained to him how this worked and he was very attracted by the idea, and said he would go into it.

I reminded him that it was unsatisfactory in principle to interfere with the liberty of the press, but that when the press was as irresponsible as it was now in India, and interfered with international relations, I felt that the "D Notice" system was justified.

I asked him whether he was quite happy about my visits to the Indian States, and he smiled and said it was a very good thing; I should visit as many as possible and he was sure my visits were doing nothing but the greatest good. I then read out to him the draft tour programme from January to April, and he thought it was excellent and well balanced, and entirely agreed with it. I told him I would have a copy of the outlined programme sent to his secretary as soon as it was more firm.

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with Mr V P Menon on December 31, 1947

Mr Menon reported that India's reference to UNO over the Kashmir issue had been despatched In this decision having been reached His Excellency s view had been the determining factor Sardar Patel had acquired in the reference being made, but was not happy about it

His Excellency said that he considered that it was most unfortunate that the Government had included in this reference a "threat" that they would take such military action as they considered necessary, regardless of the fact that the matter had been referred to UNO He asked Mr Menon what he considered the probabilities of Indian troops marching into or through Pakistan in the near future were

Mr Menon replied that he did not consider it probable that this threat would be translated into action—unless Uri fell, which might lead to the fall of Baramula and Srinagar in that event it would be very difficult to restrain the Indian leaders

Mr Menon said that two further Infantry battalions were being sent to Kashmir, and reinforcements were also being despatched to East Punjab The latter included units of States' forces, and their concentration was likely to be ready by January 15 He reported that there was no abatement in fighting on the Jammu front, where the military situation had not ceased to deteriorate Concentrations of twenty to twenty-one thousand raiders were believed to be in this area, and gun-fire had been heard from the Palace at Jammu An encouraging factor was that Major-General Kalwant Singh had been relieved by Major-General Thimayya as Commander of the Indian forces in Jammu and Kashmir, and had been brought back to fill a staff appointment at Army Headquarters

Mr Menon then referred to the [illegible] connected with the formation of an Interim Government in Kashmir He said that Pandit Nehru was backing Sheikh Abdullah fully Sardar Patel, on the other hand, was giving his support, on Mr Menon's advice, to the Maharaja and Mr Mahajan He (Mr Menon) had seen the Maharaja who had pointed out that he now had no high-level adviser whom he could trust, and had declared his willingness to abdicate if this was desired He had promised to concede responsible government on the Mysore pattern, but Sheikh Abdullah was demanding even more than this

Mr Menon also said that the RSSS activities in Jammu and Kashmir had now almost completely ceased He further referred to the provision of funds by India to Kashmir, explaining that the intention was to grant several crores, this was mainly necessitated by the fact that there had been no revenue in the State recently

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with the Prime Minister on February 5, 1948

Having had General Sir Frank Messervy to a farewell luncheon since he is giving up his appointment as Commander-in-Chief, Pakistan army, on February 11 and leaving for England, and having ascertained the feelings in Pakistan from him, I thought it would be highly desirable that he should meet the Prime Minister of India Fortunately, for this purpose, his aeroplane went unserviceable, which permitted him to remain on for the rest of the day I therefore arranged for him to stay and meet the Prime Minister with whom I had arranged an interview at 3 o'clock in any case

For an hour and a half we three discussed how the fighting in Kashmir could be stopped and complete harmony restored

between the two Dominions.

General Messervy, at my request, began by giving an account of the unfortunate Gujarat train incident in which 130 Indian soldiers and Hindu and Sikh refugees had been killed just before Mahatma Gandhi's fast The original stories that 1,500 to 2,000 had been killed were of course gross exaggerations It transpired that it was an unpremeditated assault by Afghan tribesmen returning with the body of their dead leader, Abdullah

At General Messervy's request, General Thimayya had sent a lieutenant-colonel of the Indian army to attend the Court of Enquiry This officer had been allowed complete freedom to ask any questions and to move about the officers' messes, camps and establishments of the Pakistan army When he came to bid farewell to General Messervy, he said that he could not have had a more friendly reception or received greater help or frankness. He was absolutely convinced that all the stories about the Pakistan army being behind the raiders were completely untrue and was prepared to say as much to any Indian authorities

General Messervy then gave an account of the whole Pakistan affair so far as he personally knew it In response to a request from the Prime Minister, he categorically denied that any plans, let alone dispositions, had ever been made by the Pakistan army for the purpose of invading Kashmir Although Mr Jinnah had, on the spur of the moment, ordered the Pakistan army to advance into Kashmir shortly after Indian troops had first landed there at the end of October, General Messervy stated that even if the order had not been rescinded at the request of Field-Marshal Auchinleck, it would have been almost impossible to implement it *

*Prior to the P M 's arrival, General Messervy told me that Mr Jinnah at a recent interview had stated that he was more than ever convinced that the right course would have been to have marched into Kashmir with the Pakistan army, and drew as a parallel case the Russian advance into Poland as soon as the Germans advanced When General Messervy had

It seemed to me that General Messervy was able to convince the Prime Minister that Pakistan's complicity had been limited to political intrigues and that there had been help to the tribes said that both he and Sir George Cunningham with the authority of Mr Liaquat Ali Khan, had done all they could, short of military intervention, to discourage the tribes from going on. He pointed out that military intervention would have involved them in a war with the tribes which they could not possibly afford

General Messervy went on to explain that the winter migration of tribesmen all over the plains of India had this year been stopped short at the borders of Pakistan Unfortunately they had this year been allowed to take their arms with them Apart from this they had been able, in the early days of October, to see from Murree the Dogra troops of the Maharaja burning Muslim villages across the border, and this had been the origin of the *Jehad* Indeed, it was with difficulty that the Pakistan army authorities had been able to restrain their own men, and he himself was astounded that out of 1,600 Poonchis in the Pakistan army not more than 30 or 40 had absconded and gone over to join in the *Jehad* Of these about half had come back, having fired some 15 to 20 rounds in the course of their excursion

In offering his condolences to the Prime Minister on the death of Mahatma Gandhi, he assured him that he was in a position to offer these on behalf of the whole of the Pakistan army, since

---

said that this would have meant war between the two Dominions, Mr Jinnah hotly denied this, stating that India would never have been prepared to go to war, and General Messervy had been unable to convince him to the contrary General Messervy said that Mr Jinnah had become more and more impossible and was afraid he was in an advanced stage of megalomania It was generally felt in Pakistan (and had even been expressed by Mr Liaquat Ali Khan) that Mr Jinnah's usefulness had more than expired and that he was now an obstacle and positively a menace, but nobody could see any way of getting rid of him

he had ample evidence that they sincerely mourned his death And although he had no authority to speak on behalf of the inhabitants of Pakistan, from observation it was his firm opinion that practically everybody in Pakistan equally regretted and condemned the assassination and felt that a great man and a great friend of the whole of the sub-continent of India had passed away

The Prime Minister asked a lot of questions and appeared to get satisfactory answers from General Messervy, and by the end a really friendly atmosphere of candour had clearly been established between them

General Messervy said that Mr Liaquat had asked him to try and gauge the feeling in Delhi and to come back and advise him as to any useful step that Pakistan could take to try and bring the fighting to an end and re-establish good understanding, particularly in the atmosphere created by Mahatma Gandhi's death.

At this stage I intervened to say that it was my opinion that there were no serious points of difference between the two Governments over the Kashmir issue, since both sides had agreed that there should be a fair and impartial plebiscite on the question of accession, and that this should be carried out by UNO. Both sides had agreed that all political prisoners should be released before the plebiscite and that only the regular inhabitants should vote and that they should be asked to return to do so In fact, the stumbling-block was no more than one of procedure

I suggested that the best advice General Messervy could give to Mr Liaquat Ali Khan would be that he should accept India's requirement that the Pakistan authorities should first declare that they did not support the raiders and would not give them any facilities, and, in fact, would call upon the tribesmen to withdraw and cease fighting If this were first agreed to, then it need not be published until the second point had been discussed,

namely the steps to arrange a fair plebiscite.

Pandit Nehru agreed that this would be a promising line to follow up, and General Messervy promised to convey this suggestion to his Prime Minister.

I told General Messervy that he could tell Mr Liaquat Ali Khan that my Government had repeatedly declared that they had no desire whatsoever to retain in the Indian Dominion the people of Kashmir if it were clear that their will was to accede to Pakistan. General Messervy stated that only recently Mr Liaquat Ali Khan had made a precisely similar statement as the view of the Government of Pakistan. I drew attention to the fact that this meant that both Governments were resolved to abide by the will of the people, and would feel it an embarrassment to have a large population within their respective dominions against their will.

I said that the next stumbling block was India's inability to accept the removal of Sheikh Abdullah's administration prior to the plebiscite. General Messervy pointed out that unless something were done to give the Pakistan Government some confidence in the Kashmir administration they would feel that the plebiscite could not be fair.

Pandit Nehru explained that the Government of India had already instructed their delegates at UNO to offer to hold, as soon as possible, elections on as wide a franchise as might be desired, for a new administration. In other words, Sheikh Abdullah would have to submit himself and his authority to the country for election, and that if they failed to retain their mandate, automatically the Opposition party would get into power.

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with Pandit Nehru on February 10, 1948

Pandit Nehru was very tired and rather depressed I read out to him the text of a draft letter, which was not subsequently despatched, but of which a copy is attached to this record, concerning the reply which I had received from Mr Attlee to my telegram about Mr Noel Baker's alleged remarks to Sheikh Abdullah at Lake Success

I told Pandit Nehru that I remained unashamed and unrepentant at having persuaded him to make a reference to UNO in connection with Kashmir I said that I was sure that history would prove me right in having done this, and that I hoped that he himself would agree with this view one day I told him that I would like to take as much as possible of the responsibility for having made the reference off his shoulders.

I informed him of my view that one of the main reasons why India's case had gone so badly at the Security Council was because the Indian delegation was completely outclassed by the Pakistan delegation Not only was Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar completely the wrong type to send, not being a good social mixer and having a harsh, inaudible voice, but also there was nobody to compare with Mr Mohammed Ali for doing background work behind the scenes I told Pandit Nehru that my choice of the delegation would have been Sir C P. Ramaswami Aiyar* as leader, with Mr H M Patel and possibly General Bucher † I suggested that, if it was intended to continue discussions at Lake Success after an adjournment, this team rather than the present one should be sent Pandit Nehru said that he

* Diwan of Travancore from 1936

†Lt -Gen F F R Bucher, Chief of Staff, Indian army

would think this suggestion over

I asked Pandit Nehru whether he still believed in Mr Attlee's complete integrity and intellectual honesty He fully accepted this, but still said that he could not understand what was going on at UNO He remained unconvinced that motives of power politics were not influencing the outlook of the majority of the members of the Security Council

Pandit Nehru told me that nearly all the members of the Diplomatic Corps in Delhi had informed him that they considered that India's case was a good one Why, then, was such a different line taken at Lake Success? He quoted to me in particular two conversations held with ambassadors The first of these was with the Belgian Ambassador, who, on his return from Belgium on January 13, had indicated to Pandit Nehru his belief that, good as India's case was, it was likely to meet with grave difficulties because Pakistan would be ready to "prostitute" herself to America in return for a favourable award The second story concerned Mr Grady, the American Ambassador, who on his return from the United States. had seen Sir G S Bajpai,* and told him that he considered that India's case was a good one and had put up in writing his own suggested solution which was almost exactly similar to that which had been suggested by Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar Pandit Nehru explained this apparent inconsistency on America's part by saying that Mr Grady was an honest man who did not realise the part that power politics was playing in his own country's outlook

On the question of the Russians, Pandit Nehru made it clear that there was no secret pact between India and Russia as to the course which the latter should take in the Security Council's discussions The plain fact was that Russia's had been the only delegation which had been really friendly to the Indian delegation at Lake Success

*Secretary-General, Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations Government of India

Pandit Nehru made it clear that the burden of his complaint in connection with what had happened at the Security Council was that India's original reference had been brushed aside, and months had passed without it having been properly considered. The Council had chosen to deal first with the details of the plebiscite, instead of ordering emergency action to be taken to put out the spark which was likely to set fire to the powder barrel

After this interview, I sent a further telegram to Mr Attlee including a short account of it

Top Secret

Draft of Letter

January 10, 1948

From H E
To Pandit Nehru

I have just received a reply, from Mr Attlee, to the telegram which (as I told you yesterday) I sent to him on February 8 I thought that you might like to have a summary of this reply, for your personal information Perhaps we could discuss it some time this evening

Mr Attlee starts by casting doubt on whether Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar's report of what Mr Noel Baker said to Sheikh Abdullah is altogether correct He feels that there must be some misunderstanding about this, as he cannot really believe that Mr Noel Baker made the statement imputed to him He is checking this immediately with Mr Noel Baker, and will presumably let you know the result direct

Mr Attlee goes on to state categorically that it is the sole object of the United Kingdom delegation to the Security Council

to help towards the finding of a just and permanent solution to the Kashmir problem He is convinced that this is also the object of the United States delegation and the representatives of nearly all the other members of the Council He assures me that there is no question of consideratrons of power politics affecting the opinions of these members at all

He does, however, suggest that it is the object of Russian policy to prevent a settlement over the Kashmir issue being reached, and to try to bring about conditions of anarchy and chaos in the sub-continent of India

Mr Attlee is firm in his belief that it will not be possible to convince the majority of the members of the Security Council that the plebiscite in Kashmir is going to be a fair one if it is held under the existing administration and while the State is still occupied only by Indian troops [illegible] points out that the promise of a plebiscite under these conditions is not likely to enable the Pakistan Government to convince either their own people, or the tribesmen (whom they have to convince before they can induce them to withdraw), that it will be fair

He goes on to suggest that, even if the Security Council had confined itself to the one point—namely Pakistan's complicity in giving facilities to the raiders—originally raised by India, and had then called upon Pakistan to desist, this step in itself would not have brought a lasting settlement of the issue any nearer It is only by reaching an agreement on how a fair plebiscite—and above all a plebiscite that will look fair in the eyes of the world—can be held, that the whole problem will be solved

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, on February 11, 1948

Ve had a general talk about the UNO situation He told me

that the reason he had been so opposed to a reference to UNO was that he knew that we had failed to make any friends there through the behaviour of our delegates during the previous Session India had voted against the Anglo-American interest at practically every opportunity, whereas Zafrullah Khan had very brilliantly sided with American and particularly British interests on every occasion except, of course in regard to Palestine

It was not as though we had even built up a really good position with Russia owing to the lamentable dispute as to whether Ukraine or India should be given a seat on the Security Council.

This he knew from letters from the civil servants attached to the delegation, but as they wrote to him in confidence he had not told anybody about it

I expressed regret that he had not seen fit to tell me about this while we were discussing whether to go to UNO, and admitted that this was unfortunate

He told me that the Prime Minister had mentioned my telegraphing to Mr Attlee and about Mr Attlee's reply I was able to tell him of the follow-up telegram from Mr Attlee, and I hope it had some effect

Sardar Patel asked me if I realised that once an application had been made to UNO it could not be withdrawn, so that we now found ourselves in a very difficult position in consequence

I asked him whether he thought that we had sent the best possible team to UNO He shook his head We thus mutually agreed that Mr.Gopalaswami Ayyangar was quite the wrong type to have been selected on account of his husky inarticulate way of speaking and his teetotal, and early bed-going habits We agreed that Sir Zafrullah Khan and Mr Mohammed Ali must have done brilliant work behind the scenes, meeting the delegates socially, and that India had completely missed the bus in this respect

We agreed that if there were another delegation, Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyer would be the best person to lead it (if we

could get Pandit Nehru to agree), with Mr H M Patel and possibly General Bucher as ideal persons to work behind the scenes

We then discussed Hyderabad He asked what I proposed to do about Hyderabad I told him that I was awaiting Sir Walter Monckton's arrival on February 16 to discuss the matter A foremost line must be to try and get a responsible government introduced in Hyderabad at the earliest possible moment He fully agreed with this view.

He pointed out that unless we could solve the Hyderabad problem, it would be a constant source of communal friction and would nullify all the good work now being done since Gandhiji's death

Top Secret

Record of Governor General's Interview with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on February 14, 1948

I opened the conversation by discussing the Prime Minister's letter to me of February 13 in which he threatened resignation; and I confessed to him that I had taken the opportunity of my son-in-law (Lord Eastbourne)'s return by air this afternoon to send Mr Attlee a letter putting the whole position very strongly and warning him of the trend of events Pandit Nehru nodded a smiling acknowledgment

I began by being very sympathetic and saying that I too felt almost in despair, and gradually I tried to move him out of his despondency by pointing to some alternative courses

I suggested that we should make one more effort to settle the whole matter out of court, and that for this purpose I had been keeping up my sleeve a meeting of the Joint Defence Council in Delhi At present this was called for the 17th, but I could put it off to any more suitable date that Pandit Nehru might advise.

He thought that the 17th would be a great deal too early I suggested the 21st but he said that on the 21st and 22nd there would be an AICC meeting in Delhi I then suggested that the Pakistan delegates should come into Delhi on the evening of the 22nd and have the meeting on the 23rd, but he still thought this would be too early He seemed to think that the nearer the return of Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar the better for the meeting I told him that I would be away touring in the UP from February 18 to 20, and in Travancore and Cochin from the 24th to March 2 I pointed out that I had already put off the southern India tour on account of Mahatma Gandhi's death, but that although I was anxious to avoid putting them to double inconvenience by a second postponement, naturally I considered the question of the Kashmir meetings must come first

Pandit Nehru seemed to think that about March 3 might be early enough for the meeting, since he thought Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar might be able to remain here for a fortnight and would not be arriving in Delhi until the 17th In the outcome we agreed to discuss the date further at our next meeting

Pandit Nehru said he feared that we would be unlikely to reach an agreement out of court, because the attitude of Pakistan was bound to have hardened now they thought they were winning at UNO

I took the line that I could frighten Mr Liaquat Ali Khan by pointing out that if they won at UNO, one of two things might happen either India would not accept the award in which case Pakistan would lose any advantage they had got by the award except a certain moral righteousness in the eyes of the world, or alternatively, if India decided to accept an unfavourable award, the present Government would fall, and I was quite sure that Mr Liaquat Ali Khan would view the prospect of Pandit Nehru's losing control in India with horror and could be willing to pay quite a considerable price to avoid his going

Pandit Nehru entirely agreed that it would be admirable if the

case could be settled out of court, but he was not as optimistic as I was that this could be achieved

I told him that General Bucher had come to me and volunteered to go to UNO on behalf of India, as he felt he could help to put the case over Pandit Nehru expressed great appreciation at this loyal offer, but felt, as I did, that it would be better to have an Indian soldier rather than a Britisher to represent India at UNO

I then strongly recommended Major-General Choudhury, the DCGS I reminded Pandit Nehru that I had specially selected him to organize Pandit Nehru's tour of Malaya, and I told him that I thought he was probably the best all-round soldier in the Indian army today, and was undoubtedly going to be a great Commander-in-Chief one day Pandit Nehru entirely agreed

I urged that Mr H.M Patel should also be attached to Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar's staff in order that he could counter Mr Mohammed Ali's activities behind the scenes at UNO I pointed out to Pandit Nehru that my experience of international conferences showed that most of the work and progress was done behind the scenes, at meals and after dinner Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar being a teetotaller and a man who went to bed at 9 o'clock every night and who spoke in a hoarse and inarticulate manner, it was out of the question that he could do any good outside the conference room, whereas Mr Patel and Gen Choudhury would, I felt, more than counterbalance the influence of Sir Zafrullah Khan and Mr Mohammed Ali

I also tried to persuade Pandit Nehru to appoint Sir C P Ramaswami Aiyer, at least temporarily, to take Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar's place at UNO, since the former was already in America on his lecture tour I argued that the very fact that he had been publicly at variance with Pandit Nehru over the Travancore accession issue would lend weight to his representation now that he was (in the event) arguing on behalf of the Dominion of India The Prime Minister unfortunately took the

opposite view, namely that he would be regarded as a friend of the Maharaja's pleading the case of the Maharaja of Kashmir I therefore regretfully dropped the matter

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, on February 14, 1948

I found the Deputy Prime Minister just about as depressed as the Prime Minister had been when he arrived for his interview at 6 o'clock I followed the same technique of expressing equal depression and gradually working up a certain amount of optimism and enthusiasm I was not, however successful with Sardar Patel over the question of a compromise solution with Mr Liaquat Ali Khan, since he felt that this could not be achieved

He was depressed about not being able to withdraw the reference to UNO, and he was depressed about the outcome of the award For he feared that Pandit Nehru's position in the country would be unsafe, and in fact he feared for his life if things went wrong, since he said that Gandhi's plotters had by no means all been laid by the heels

I told him about my suggestion that Mr H M Patel and Major-General Choudhury should join Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar's staff, with which he heartily agreed I told him that I had failed to get the Prime Minister to agree to appointing Sir C.P Ramaswami Aiyer temporarily to lead the delegation to UNO, and he expressed great disappointment at this failure

Sardar Patel told me that we were now reaping the fruits of three cardinal blunders which had been made in connection with our relations with the UK and with UNO The first was the appointment of Mr Krishna Menon as High Commissioner, since he was known to be a communist sympathiser Secondly,

there was the appointment of Mr Asaf Ali as our Ambassador in America (since his wife, Aruna, was practically a communist). Thirdly, there was the line which Mrs Pandit had taken when she attended the general meeting of UNO During this session she appeared to have gone out of her way to vote against the rest of the Commonwealth and America and with Russia, quite gratuitously whereas Sir Zafrullah Khan played his cards brilliantly—always voting with the Anglo-American bloc except on the specific issue of Palestine The tragedy was that Pandit Nehru was neither a communist nor pro-Russian, but he had succeeded in giving the impression to the rest of the Commonwealth and America that India was going to run against them. This, Sardar Patel left, was the basic reason of the hostility to India and friendliness to Pakistan at UNO

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar, Mr V P Menon, Mr H M Patel, on Tuesday, February 17, 1948

His Excellency kept back these Ministers and Secretaries after the Defence Committee Meeting He said that Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar had suggested to him that one more effort might now be made to settle the Kashmir issue with Pakistan out of court He accordingly proposed that Mr Liaquat Ali Khan should be invited to come to Delhi for a Joint Defence Council meeting on February 23 or 24 He asked the Ministers for their views on this proposal

Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar indicated that he was in agreement with it.

The Deputy Prime Minister said that he did not think that it was worthwhile making an effort to find a compromise solu-

tion out of court He gave his view that the Pakistan Ministers were very suspicious of His Excellency himself He said that he was certain that nothing would come of the effort, but he would raise no objection to it being made

The Prime Minister said that he thought that it would be very difficult to make any advance with Mr Liaquat Ali Khan. However, he would agree to a Joint Defence Council meeting being convened for February 23, and that His Excellency should "sound" Mr Liaquat Ali Khan after this and then call a Prime Minister's meeting on Kashmir if he left that progress might be made

(*Note* When communicated with subsequently, Mr Liaquat Ali Khan declined to come to Delhi on the dates mentioned, on the grounds that a meeting of the Pakistan Constitution Assembly was due to start on February 23, and on the alternative dates which were proposed of February 21 and 22

Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar gave his view that if the British delegation had taken a definite stand at Lake Success in favour of the issue which India had raised being considered first, things would have been very different He said that one question which he had not been able to get anybody to answer satisfactorily was why the Security Council had passed a Resolution calling upon Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria to stop giving help to the Greek guerillas, and had indeed appointed a Commission to ensure that this direction was complied with

Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar pointed out that no single order which had been given by the Security Council on any subject to date had been put intoeffect by the country or countries concerned It was suggested that in the event of India refusing to act on a direction from the Security Council about Kashmir, sanctions might be applied Mr H M Patel reported that India's allocation of all supplies from Anglo-American sources had already been cut down Furthermore, information had been received that an order for arms, including medium bombers,

from the United States, was not going to be complied with The Prime Minister said that he understood that the man behind the refusal to meet this order was the American ex-Consul in Goa. This man had also been advising Senator Warren on the Security Council and was known to have an anti-Indian bias

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with Pandit Nehru, Sardar Patel, Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar, and Mr Gordon Walker on February 25, 1948 (I)

Pandit Nehru drew attention to the difference in the approach to the Kashmir problem, of India and Pakistan The Pakistan case was based on the assumption that all Muslims automatically wanted to join Pakistan This, unlike India's, was a purely communal approach, and, in his opinion, [illegible] fundamentally in the conception of the two Dominions and particularly, so far as Kashmir was concerned Aftar all, there were four million Muslims in India He believed that Pakistan's approach had, unfortunately, seized and held the mind of the Security Council Perhaps the Indian case in this regard had not been sufficiently strongly put In his opinion, the whole problem could only be solved on a non-communal basis—even though account had of course to be taken of the communal aspect There was no other way of solving it The Government of India were at present laying the greatest stress on erasing communalism Perhaps this policy would have some effect on the at present purely communal policy of Pakistan He reiterated that he had no doubt in his mind that India's approach was the more correct, and that he much hoped that this position would be appreciated by the Security Council

Pandit Nehru went on to say that he and his Government would hate to do anything which would shake up the UNO

structure or be construed as not carrying out a direction given by UNO Such a conception was particularly painful after Mahatma Gandhi's death So he and his Government were keen to find some way out in accordance with the wishes of the Security Council On the other hand, a Government like the present one had to function under certain limitations There were certain things which it could hardly do without imperilling the situation both of itself and indeed generally throughout India Clear pledges had been given to the people of Kashmir It would be a grave betrayal to walk out and leave them to the mercy of those whom they considered to be their enemies So, if the decision of the Security Council went completely against what the Government of India had pledged themselves to do, peace would not be secured He personally, in such circumstances, would not be able to continue in the Government

Pandit Nehru said that it had been an act of faith by the Government of India, at a time when the situation was rapidly deteriorating, to make their reference to the Security Council in the first place If this faith was now proved to be misplaced, the consequences would have to be borne by those who had made the reference

Sardar Patel said that Pandit Nehru had in particular had great faith in the institution of UNO But the Security Council had been meddling in power politics to such an extent that very little of this faith was left He pointed out that it had been the Governor-General who had induced the Government to make the reference to UNO in the first place

With this the Governor-General agreed He said that he hoped very sincerely that his Government would not be made to suffer on account of their act of faith

Pandit Nehru then said that he and his Government could not and did not want to hold Kashmir against the will of the inhabitants of that State This was despite the fact that he had no doubt that the accession of Kashmir to Pakistan would mean

the ruin of Kashmir

Pandit Nehru then referred to the question of retention of Indian troops in Kashmir prior to the plebiscite He pointed out that, if these troops were withdrawn, propaganda would be made to the effect that they had been pushed to, and were unable to help the inhabitants The same objections applied to the supercession of the present administration He supposed that there was perhaps a fear that the Indian troops might misbehave during the period preceding the plebiscite It was difficult to give a guarantee that they would not—but they had an excellent record up to date They had to remain because of the inherent danger of another invasion from outside But it would be possible to guarantee that anything improper which was done by them would be known He would have no objection whatsoever to UNO observers being attached to them He would certainly agree to a UNO liaison officer being posted to each unit of the Indian army in Kashmir

Mr Gordon Walker asked how it was envisaged that Indian troops would ensure the maintenance of law and order in Poonch To this Pandit Nehru was unable to give a ready answer Mr Gordon Walker pointed out that Pakistan would also argue that the very fact that Indian troops were in Kashmir was bound to act as some sort of pressure Pandit Nehru said that Mr Liaquat Ali Khan had in fact accepted that Indian troops should remain there, concentrated at strategic points Mr Gordon Walker said that he was sure that Mr Liaquat Ali Khan would not say the same thing now Pandit Nehru said that he believed that Pakistan would nevertheless prefer the retention of Indian troops to reconstitution and of occupation by the state army

Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar pointed out that the responsibility for internal security lay in the hands of the state government. But it was nevertheless essential that army units should be available to go to the aid of the civil power if required—and it

was essential that these army units should be from the Indian army

Pandit Nehru finally said that he would agree to handing over to states police in large areas He would also certainly agree to a formula whereby the army would not exercise normal peace functions

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with Pandit Nehru, Sardar Patel, Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar, and Mr Gordon Walker, on February 26, 1948

Attention was drawn to a particular dilemma, in India's case, in connection with Poonch If Indian troops entered Poonch, there were bound to be allegations that the object of this was to suppress the inhabitants If Indian troops did not go in, how was law and order to be restored so that a plebiscite could take place? Sardar Patel said that he would have no objection to Indian troops being withdrawn from Poonch once order was restored. He pointed out that there were 30,000 non-Muslim refugees in Poonch town Pandit Nehru said that he considered that the formula to which he had agreed the previous day, concerning the non-interference by the army in the affairs of the civil police, might be made to apply to Poonch -subject, of course, to the proviso that if a grave emergency arose, the army would have to go in He said that Sheikh Abdullah had told Mr Noel Baker in New York that it was his object to try to win over the people of Poonch to his point of view The word "suppress," in the course of this conversation, was only used by Sheikh Abdullah in a reference to what might happen if some people in Poonch continued with their revolt even after such efforts had been made

The Governor-General said that he thought that the Poonch

dilemma might be solved by sending an adequate number of UNO observers with the units of the Indian army which went there Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar said that he considered that it would be necessary for civil administration to be restored in the Poonch area prior to the plebiscite, this would have to be part of the administration of Kashmir State There was no question of the Azad Kashmir Government continuing to administer Poonch up to the time of the plebiscite, because this would not give the necessary source of security to enable non-Muslims to return to their homes

The Governor-General asked whether a measure of autonomy might not be granted to the Poonch area in advance of the plebiscite Pandit Nehru replied that he considered that this would be very difficult He agreed that police for the Poonch area might be raised from the local inhabitants of that area, but it would be difficult to appoint ex-rebels It was not a question of appointing Muslims or Hindus The point was who the Muslim officers appointed were going to be He agreed that another way of solving the dilemma might be by the proclamation of certain guarantees

The Governor-General said that he assumed that the plebiscite would be run constituency-wise This Pandit Nehru confirmed. The Governor-General went on to ask what the reactions of the Government would be if, for example, Poonch voted overwhelmingly for Pakistan, whilst the rest of Kashmir voted for India; or if most of the state voted for Pakistan, but Jammu voted overwhelmingly for India Would the Government insist on the continued integrity of Kashmir as a whole? Surely, in the latter instance, Pakistan would have nothing but trouble if they got an unwilling Jammu Another huge evacuation would presumably result

It was pointed out that at the moment Pakistan's answer to any suggestion of Kashmir being partitioned was likely to be in the negative Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar pointed out that if it

was previously agreed to hold the plebiscite by districts, that would virtually mean that the Government had already made up its mind on partition Mr Gordon Walker suggested the possibility that it might he left open to the UNO Commission to make recommendations on the interpretation of the plebiscite in extreme cases

The Governor-General then suggested that the possibility of including a vote for independence in the plebiscite might be put at UNO If this was to be done, the Government of India would have to arrange diplomatically for one of the smaller members of the Security Council to do it Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar said that he would have no objection to this, it might indeed give India a tactical advantage But he would be unable to commit India to acceptance of the suggestion until he had heard the Pakistan comments The same thing really applied to any scheme of partition being put up

Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar pointed out that it was difficult to put three issues before the voters in the plebiscite If there were to be three choices, the plebiscite would have to be held in two parts The first part might be whether or not the accession to India was to be ratified, and if the answer to this was in the negative the second part would then be a choice between independence and Pakistan Alternatively, the first part might be the choice between accession and independence, and, in the event of accession being chosen, the second question would be whether this would be to India or to Pakistan Another possibility suggested was that a General Election should first be held to produce an Assembly Such a body would be able more readily to give the answers to more than one question A referendum could then be made to the electorate to confirm the decision of the Assembly

Pandit Nehru pointed out that the Indian proposals had already included the holding of a General Election before the plebiscite, the Assembly thus chosen would form an interim

government, which would organise the plebiscite itself He confirmed that all the offers which had been made, that UNO observers should come to the plebiscite, applied equally to an election

The Governor-General raised the question of the administration of Kashmir during the period preceding the plebiscite He pointed out that there was a body of opinion in the Security Council which felt that if the administration was completely one-sided, its very existence would prejudice the plebiscite. Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar drew attention to the necessity for carefully distinguishing between the civil administration of the State and the administration of the plebiscite itself So far as the latter was concerned, India would have no objection to it being put under persons nominated by UNO but appointed by the State

Pandit Nehru said that any question of widening the administration would have to be by the introduction of persons chosen by Sheikh Abdullah People who represented the opposite viewpoint, but who would not set about sabotaging the Government, would have to be chosen He was not prepared to call the administration which would result from such a broadening a "coalition ministry", nor to discuss with Pakistan the number and details of the personnel who would be introduced The object would have to be to produce a team which would work together and represent large sections of the Kashmir population Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar said that the formula which he would adopt, if pressed in this matter was that Sheikh Abdullah would certainly consider the possibility of including members of the Muslim Conference in his Cabinet He pointed out that Sheikh Abdullah indeed even now hoped to persuade Ghulam Abbas (the head of the Muslim Conference in Kashmir) to come in

The Governor-General drew attention to the difficulties which had existed in the Indian Interim Government prior to the transfer of power Pandit Nehru pointed out that conditions in

Kashmir at the present time would make the analogous difficulties in a coalition Government very much worse. Futhermore, there would be no-one like the Viceroy to compose the differences between the two parties in the Government

Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar gave his view that the question of the plebiscite should be looked at more as a political, than as an administrative issue Whatever the administration in power might be, each party would have to fight out the issues of the plebiscite before the electorate It might be useful to quote the parallel of the North-West Frontier Province, where the Congress ministry in power had not been removed before the referendum had taken place there in July, 1947, and where the overwhelming mass of the voters had voted in favour of the opposite point of view to that held by the ministry

Pandit Nehru made the point that the last election which had been held in Kashmir was completely bogus The Maharaja himself had indeed admitted to this If the tribesmen's raid on Kashmir had not taken place, there would have been a further election and much progress towards responsible government by now

Top Secret

APPENDIX I

Besides the settlement of course of the main Kashmir issue, there is also an anxiety among the Ministers of both the Indian Union and Pakistan to come to an early settlement for mutual benefit of all other points of difference and matters of common interest There seems to be a great deal of common factors in the views of Ministers of both sides in particular on the following points

1 Readjustment of certain boundaries where necessary
2 Jute of Eastern Bengal

3. Cotton of Punjab and Sind
4 Certain minimum percentage in services of minority communities so as to restore confidence in the minorities living on either side
5 Control of press and public opinion, so as to avoid unfriendly references to the authorities and policies of the other Government on either side
6 Agreement on the joint tariff policy so as to be beneficial to either side
7 Common policy for avoiding border incidents and control of disturbing private organizations on either side
8. A generous common policy towards supply of raw material from either side

Top Secret

APPENDIX II

The Dominions of India and Pakistan, in their mutual interest, are anxious to establish peaceful and happy relations between them, and have accordingly agreed to the following terms

I The Pakistan Government agree and undertake

(a) that the tribesmen and all outsiders will be made to leave the territories of Kashmir and Jammu,

(b) that the present Azad army forces will be made to dissolve; and

(c) that as soon as peace and normal conditions are established the Pakistan government will make all arrangements for holding a free and fair plebiscite in order to ascertain the true verdict of the people—whether they wish to accede to Pakistan or India—and that verdict will be given effect to accordingly

Provided

II The Government of India on their part agree to withdraw

their troops from Kashmir and Jammu within a specified time, not exceeding four weeks, and further agree that the Pakistan Government should immediately take complete charge of the administration of Kashmir and Jammu, and their responsibility for restoring peace and maintaining law and order with the assistance of such police and military force as the Pakistan Government may think necessary

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with Mr Liaquat Ali Khan, Prime Minister of Pakistan, at New Delhi on March 19, 1948

Mr Liaquat Ali Khan, who had been in a marvellous mood throughout his visit and seemed obviously to have recovered his health and vigour and friendliness, gratuitously approached me about the relationships between India and Pakistan He said how much he liked and admired Pandit Nehru and how confident he was that so long as he was Prime Minister of India he would do everything in his power to avoid a conflict and bring the two Dominions into friendship

He told me that he would be "fit for a lunatic asylum" if he did anything that could possibly bring on a conflict between the two Dominions and said that, on the contrary, he wished to give me a categorical assurance that he intended to do everything in his power to improve relations between India and Pakistan in every way possible

I told him that if these were his views, I recommended him to telegraph to Sir Zafrullah Khan instructing him to go out of his way to meet India's case at UNO and find a compromise solution so as to avoid this sore dragging on and making trouble between the two Dominions

I asked him whether he would be prepared to accept a really impartial plebiscite if it went against Pakistan He categorically

assured me that if a fair plebiscite went against Pakistan he would pledge that they would make no further effort to win Kashmir over to Pakistan

I informed him that I would report this conversation to Pandit Nehru and would urge him to send a similar telegram to Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, on March 20, 1948

I reported to him the conversation I had had with Mr Liaquat Ali Khan the previous evening Pandit Nehru expressed great pleasure at this attitude

I then told him that I hoped he would telegraph to Gopalaswami Ayyangar along the lines suggested He asked what the suggested line really amounted to, and I pointed out that it amounted to giving up the idea of allowing Sheikh Abdullah a free hand in charge of the Kashmir administration I told him that I was convinced, from all I had heard from other reliable sources—both British and foreign—that Sheikh Abdullah had created the worst possible impression at UNO by his bitterness about Pakistan and by the speeches he had made recently in which he said they would fight to the last man against Pakistan—words calculated to make the Security Council feel that he was a man incapable of running a fair and impartial administration prior to the plebiscite

I told Pandit Nehru that what I recommended, in fact, was that he should give Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar authority to accept an Interim Government over which Sheikh Abdullah would not be able to ride roughshod

Pandit Nehru said that this matter hardly arose, since the Security Council resolution already gave us more than this

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on March 30, 1948

I told the Prime Minister I was aware of the exchange of telegrams between the two Dominion Commanders-in-Chief on the subject of the fighting in Kashmir I told him that the very first talks on the subject had in fact taken place between General Gracey and myself during his last visit to Delhi, but that I now understood that matters had developed considerably in my absence

I told him that whereas General Gracey was apt to fancy himself as having some political knowledge and was less likely to keep the necessary close touch with his own Prime Minister, he could rest assured that General Bucher would never attempt to take any political action, and could keep close touch with his Prime Minister

Pandit Nehru entirely agreed I asked him if he minded my requesting General Bucher to send his complete file on this matter to me, and he replied "Certainly, of course"

I spoke to him about the securing of the Bombay Yacht Club premises, and he offered to help I told him I could ask the Defence Minister to get in touch with him about it before he took any action

I showed him the following extract from the letter Mr Kingsley Martin had written to my Press Attache

"Noel Baker looks ill and worried (as usual) but he will obviously sweat his guts out to get agreement and I think it is true that the Indian public, the Indian leaders, are much misled by the accounts of UNO given in the Indian Press It is quite appalling the damage done by Sheikh Abdullah, who appears to have completely repudiated the very idea of a fair plebiscite and outraged everyone on the Council"

I took the advantage of pointing out that this merely confirmed what I had already heard from members of the Corps Diplomatique and from their friends in England

I pointed out that so long as the head of the new administration in Kashmir expressed himself as publicly determined to prevent Kashmir from going to Pakistan, that it was impossible for members of the Security Council to feel that any reliance could be placed on his announcements.

I believed that it was partly on this account that they continuously pressed for concessions from India on this matter

The Prime Minister did not altogether agree He pointed out that all the members of the Security Council, excluding of course Noel Baker, whose well-known anti-Indian attitude precluded his taking an objective view, had been in favour of the Chinese resolution, even including the US representative Senator Warren Austen It was not correct to say that it was mistrust of Sheikh Abdullah which was calling for concessions from India It would be more correct to say that this was due to Sir Zafrullah Khan's intransigent attitude and the fact that the Security Council felt too meek to impose a decision and were anxious to obtain a decision agreed by both sides Needless to say, in the forefront of such a movement was Noel Baker himself.

I pointed out to Pandit Nehru that provided it were made really clear to the Security Council that concession by India would only be given on the understanding that whether Pakistan agreed or not, the Security Council would announce their award on the basis of India's concessions, then I was firmly convinced that we should give as many concessions as would not endanger his personal position or that of his Government in the country

Pandit Nehru was of the opinion that the more concessions that we gave, the more Sir Zafrullah Khan would dig his toes in and insist on further concessions They were therefore disposed to limit the number of concessions they were now going to give and leave it to UNO to bring pressure to bear on Pakistan by

way of a change

He informed me that at the Cabinet meeting the night before they had decided not to agree to Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar's suggestion that India should withdraw the delegation and certainly would not to the making of any intransigent announcement

I [illegible] the Prime Minister warmly on this decision and said that nothing could possibly harm our cause more than our taking up an unreasonable attitude after UNO had come round so much in their attitude between the two Dominions

I drew Pandit Nehru's attention to the military position I told him that if the truce arranged between the two Commanders-in-Chief broke down, that the 3 7" Howitzer battery which had apparently come from Swat would certainly open fire again and that the town of Poonch with its 40 thousand refugees could expect heavy continuous shelling as long as the ammunition lasted I pointed out that if we failed to get a settlement at UNO that the present war conditions would continue and that for every crore that it cost India, undoubtedly Pakistan would hardly have to spend a lakh Thus the harm of going on fighting would be crippling to India, and to all Pandit Nehru's great ideas of raising the standard of living of the common people, whereas it would affect Pakistan very little if at all, for the money they spent on keeping the tribes supplied with ammunition, petrol, etc , would be reasonably well spent from their point of view in diverting the tribesmen from their own territory

I think Pandit Nehru really appreciated this situation as he expressed his great wish for an early reasonable settlement I discussed with him the draft constitution for India, and mentioned that I had fortuitously run into Sir B N Rau* at the Constitution Club the night before, and that he had told me in

*Constitutional Adviser to the Constituent Assembly of India from July 1946

the course of conversation, of Pandit Nehru's decision that all three words, "Republic", "State" and "Commonwealth" were to be printed in the draft Constitution so as to leave a free choice Sir B N Rau had informed me that he thought a Committee of 40 were most likely to choose "State"

Pandit Nehru smiled and said Sir B N Rau had not much political experience and advised me not to place too much reliance on his forecasts I then said, "Will you be taking the chair at the meeting of the Committee of 40?" He replied that he thought he would be, and I then put it to him that it would largely depend on the way he handled the Committee as to which word they chose He surprised me by saying he had intended to leave all three words in for the matter to be debated in the Constituent Assembly I told him I thought this would be a most unfortunate procedure if he really was trying to avoid using the word 'Republic" Surely the thing was to get the Committee of 40 to support the idea of "State" or "Commonwealth" and then for it to be put before the Constituent Assembly in that form On the whole Pandit Nehru seemed to agree with this view

Top Secret

Record of a Meeting between the Governor-General and the Prime Minister and PSGG on April 19, 1948*

The Governor-General showed the Prime Minister a statement he had had prepared showing in two columns the original Chinese Resolution on Kashmir and the present amended Resolution, together with comments explaining the difference between the two Resolutions

The Prime Minister said that subject to a discussion on certain points, he had been prepared to accept the original Chinese

*Private Secretary to the Governor-General (Capt R V Brockman)

Resolution He was not, however, prepared to accept the present Resolution, which he considered had been altered in three or four fundamental respects, which were quite unacceptable to India

Firstly, the Prime Minister said that the whole general approach to the problem was once again wrong in that Pakistan was being placed on an equal footing with India in the Resolution The Governor General pointed out, however, that in the very first sentence of the Preamble a re-wording had been made to put India's complaint in the foreground He also drew attention to the fact that paragraphs I (a) and (b), under "Restoration of Peace and Order", had also been transposed, and that this amendment had strengthened the case against Pakistan

Secondly, the Prime Minister said that he was not happy about the new wording of the Preamble, and particularly the instructions to the Commission, in which they were instructed to place their good offices and mediation at the disposal of the Governments of India and Pakistan with a view to facilitating the taking of the necessary measures by the two Governments, both with regard to the restoration of peace and order, and to the holding of the plebiscite He appreciated that the instructions in this Clause applied to the Commission only, but he said that he was sure that there was a loophole here for Pakistan to interpret it as allowing them to interfere with India's actions, both in regard to the restoration of peace and order and to the holding of the plebiscite

Thirdly, the Prime Minister said that India had always insisted that it would be essential to retain troops in the State for the purposes of defence, and drew attention to paragraph 2 (a) of the original Chinese Resolution, which clearly covered this point He said that he could find no reference to defence in the latest Resolution, and only references to law and order

The Governor-General said that he did not agree with this reading of the revised Resolution He suggested to the Prime

Minister that paragraph 2 (a) as redrafted was an improvement, in that the withdrawal of Indian troops would not take place until the fighting had stopped, which was an improvement on simultaneous withdrawal, as in the original Chinese Resolution. He added that he thought that this paragraph referred only to sufficient troops remaining as might be required for the maintenance of law and order

The Governor-General then drew the Prime Minister's attention to paragraph 2 (c), (i) (ii) and (iii), and particularly to the fact that after the Indian troops had been reduced to the minimum strength required for law and order, the stationing of the remaining forces (i e , in his opinion, those required for defence) should be carried out in accordance with certain principles, i e., as small a number as possible should be retained in the forward areas, and that the reserve of troops should be located in their present base areas The Prime Minister did not entirely subscribe to this reading of paragraph 2, and said that he thought it ought to be cleared up.

The Governor-General pointed out in addition that it was clearly for the Government of India to decide the strength of forces required in Kashmir, and that in any case if a large number of forces were withdrawn from Kashmir, they should leave all their equipment behind, and he was sure that the Commander-in-Chief could make adequate and speedy arrangements to fly them in again in an emergency

Fourthly, the Prime Minister said that he did not like the new paragraph 5, in that there was a loophole here which, in certain circumstances, allowed Pakistan troops to be used in the State The Governor-General pointed out that the agreement of the Government of India would be required for such a step, but the Prime Minister said that equally the agreement of the Government of Pakistan would be required for the entry of any Indian troops into the State, even though he agreed that this paragraph referred only to the maintenance of law and order He added

that it was very unsatisfactory for the Government of Pakistan to be placed in this paragraph on an equality with the Government of India, but as each Government could, in these circumstances, cancel the other out, he could not persuade to see the value of the paragraph being included

Fifthly, the Prime Minister said that he took very grave exception to the wording of paragraph 6 of the Resolution, which was quite unacceptable to India He said that he realised that the number of representatives from the major political groups to be invited to join the Government would be decided by India, and that these representatives would only join the Kashmir Government while the plebiscite was being prepared and carried out These were satisfactory provisions, but it was quite impossible to accept that the major political groups in Kashmir should themselves designate the representatives who should join the Government He said that Sheikh Abdullah would be placed in an impossible position in such circumstances, and he was sure that public opinion in India would not accept that the Azad Kashmir Government and the Muslim National Conference, both of whom had been responsible for barbarous happenings in the State, should be allowed to nominate their own representatives to the State Government where they could cause untold trouble

Lastly, the Prime Minister said that continued pressure had been brought on India to abandon Sheikh Abdullah and remove him from his position as head of the Government They had always resisted this and would continue to do so, but he regarded the proposals in paragraphs 8, 9 and 10, above the control of the State forces and the police and the appointments of special magistrates within the State judicial system, as likely to accomplish the same and by undermining the power and authority of the Government entirely The Governor-General said that he could not see how such proposals would prevent a fair and impartial plebiscite being held, and he added that without some safeguards of this nature he was convinced that world opinion

would not accept any plebiscite held under Abdullah's aegis as being impartial

In regard to the appointment of special magistrates, the Prime Minister said that he regarded them as unnecessary The functions visualised for them would be executive rather than judicial, and he thought it would be sufficient for official observers to report any happenings of the type visualised direct to the Commission, who would give decisions

The Prime Minister re-emphasised that he was extremely disgusted with everything that had happened at Lake Success, and that he did not intend to reply to Mr Attlee or to send any further instructions to Gopalaswami The Governor-General said that he thought that we ought not to be so uncompromising, and the Prime Minister, that PSGG should record the discussion in the form of a telegram to Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar, which he should discuss immediately with Mr H V R Iengar* and Mr K P S Menon †

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with the High Commissioner for Pakistan, Khwaja Shahabuddin, on May 1, 1948

I asked Khwaja Shahabuddin how he felt that relations between the two Dominions now were and he replied that within the month he had noticed a visible relaxing of the tension and a positive improvement of relations This in part he attributed to the happy way the Arbitral Tribunal had done its work but even more to the successful outcome of the Inter-Dominion discussions in Calcutta

*Principal Private Secretary to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

†The first Foreign Secretary of India, who later served as the Indian Ambassador in Moscow from 1952 to 1961.

On being questioned he admitted that at the end of last year he was one of the many who thought that war between the two Dominions was very close He was certain that the reference to UNO by India had saved war or at all events the risk of war and that if UNO did not find a satisfactory solution now, war would longer supervene

He complained of Mr Noel Baker's attitude at UNO saying that at first he had taken a very fair and impartial attitude which had pleased Pakistan, but later on had veered so violently towards India that Pakistan could no longer accept his views

I told him that the views of the Government of India were that Mr Noel Baker had begun by brushing aside India's complaint and dealing with the matter in a manner which could only please Pakistan The Chinese representative had then produced a resolution acceptable to India and in the view of India, Mr Noel Baker had been primarily responsible for whittling it away in favour of Pakistan The High Commissioner begged me not to be taken in by these tactics. He said Congress had always used the same tactics· they had always accused the British officials of being pro-Muslim League and anti-Congress and had brought such pressure to bear on individuals in the past that they had in fact had to become pro-Congress and anti-Muslim League in order to clear themselves of these accusations No doubt India was following the same policy with regard to Mr Noel Baker and HMG

I told him he could not expect me to agree with what he had said

Finally, he said that in his opinion unless the Kashmir issue was settled before I left India, it would never be settled satisfactorily Would it not be possible for me to call meetings between the two Prime Ministers and settle the thing out of court?

I told him that as constitutional Governor-General of one Dominion, I could not possibly act in this way, but that if Mr Liaquat Ali Khan cared to approach Pandit Nehru on his own

and ask if he could come to Delhi for the monthly Prime Ministers' meeting which was now slightly overdue, that I would of course gladly put him up at Government House and would no doubt be present at any informal talks that might take place between the two Prime Ministers at Government House

I pointed out that there were two essentials

(i) that the proposed meetings should ostensibly be on matters other than Kashmir, and

(ii) that this present discussion should not be quoted by the High Commissioner

He agreed entirely and said he would see what he could do when he got to Karachi

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with General Gracey on May 2, 1948

I had an all-round gossip with General Gracey about the situation in Pakistan He confirmed my impression that except for Kashmir, relations between the two Dominions were constantly improving He paid a great tribute to India's efforts to get Pakistan's share of the military stores transferred to them. The quantity of stores was so great that even under the scheme proposed by Supreme Headquarters it could not have taken less than two or three years for the transfer to be completed, but now with the dislocation caused by the riots, the shortage of rolling stock, etc , the present scheme would take between four and five years for the transfer to be completed He felt that this must be accepted although it was far from satisfactory, and he would continue to press General Bucher to try and speed up the process

At all events, he said that no one in Pakistan seriously thought that India were now holding out any more I expressed extreme gratification at this, for it was on the basis that Pakistan would

be more likely to get their stores, and quickly, by this scheme, that I had encouraged an early disbanding of Supreme Headquarters

Next I asked him how the Pakistan armed forces stood in relation to war How ready were they if war came between the two Dominions? General Gracey shrugged his shoulders and said, "Pakistan has not got a hope The air force can hardly take the air, and it will be years before the Royal Pakistan Air Force is efficient The army, such as it is, is quite efficient, but it is half the size of the army of India and has no proper backing The Pakistan army would run out of ammunition very quickly indeed in the event of any large scale engagements and there were no armament factories of any type in Pakistan to replenish stocks In fact, in any war between the two Dominions, Pakistan would be completely defeated militarily in a fairly short space of time, although the Muslim soldiers would fight with great gallantry and to the death "

I asked him whether his Ministers were aware of this appreciation He said that he saw them very rarely since his headquarters were in Rawalpindi and the Central Government stayed at Karachi, but he had on more than one occasion painted this type of picture to various Ministers

I asked him if he thought that this would deter them from making war and he replied that he did not think Pakistan would ever declare war on India, the only possible exception being that they might be driven to support the Azad Government in Kashmir if things went too harshly with them and public opinion was roused to an uncontrollable pitch Otherwise, he was sure *Pakistan would never fight unless actually invaded*, and then he was certain they would fight to the last man, however hopeless the situation

I urged him to prepare a report based on the proceedings of the Inter-Dominion Defence Secretaries' Committee meeting held on May 2, reporting the improved rate of flow of stores

into Pakistan and relating it to the overall military position and pointing out that it would be several years before Pakistan would be in a position to defend themselves if attacked

I urged him to make it abundantly clear that in the event of war. Pakistan would be finished, however gallantly they fought, in a very few weeks unless they had adequate stoks of ammunition and some war factories, which could not occur for several years

Above all I stressed he must not word his report to suggest that Pakistan could not undertake an offensive war because if they could not undertake a defensive war, the former went without saying, and war better left unsaid

General Gracey promised to send this off as soon as he got back and fully realised that the more the Government of Pakistan could visualise the hopelessness of fighting India, the more likely was it that they would avoid war at all costs

I told him that I proposed to bring to the notice of the Government of India the military situation of India which, although far stronger than Pakistan's, was still not such as to permit of any other war than the one in Kashmir I fact I pointed out that if we could get the two Governments to feel themselves thoroughly militarily impotent, that this appeared to be the best chance of reducing the risk of war after my departure

Note of an Interview with the Prime Minister on January 14, 1948

Nehru asked me with his very engaging and rather shy smile whether he may raise a rather delicate personal matter "How long have you decided to stay with us?" In the course of discussion the Prime Minister hinted that he hoped I would be able to stay as long as possible and indicated distress when I said I was leaving on April 15. I finally said that I would leave the decision open until I could have a further discussion with him, but would not assess the exact date to a week or even a month The Prime

Minister said that the Constituent Assembly would be meeting for the final Constitution making process in April and he thought they should finish their work within two months, and he therefore said that they would not like me to leave before the middle of June at the earliest

I told him that I certainly did not intend to press the mid-April date and would probably agree to mid-June, but that what I wished to avoid was entering into a new period after the interim period might be regarded as closed For then, I might as well stay for five or ten years as one year In any case, we both agreed to leave the matter open until I could have another discussion with him on my return from Bikaner

Note of an Interview with the Prime Minister on January 22,1948

We continued our last discussion about my tenure of office I told Pandit Nehru that I had had time to consider his request that I should stay on until the middle or end of June and was prepared to accept, but I said I should like a firm date for my departure I pointed out that my birthday was on June 25, and that my mother who was 84 set great store by family anniversaries, particularly now when she had obviously not much longer to live I would like the Prime Minister's concurrence therefore to write and tell her that she could now count on my being home to spend my birthday with her This would mean leaving about June 21 Pandit Nehru said that this date was acceptable to him, and authorised me to have an unofficial announcement put out through my Press Attache to this effect

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with the Prime Minister on March 18, 1948

I asked him whether he had yet thought of who my successor

should be, and I urged him to consider Mr Rajagopalachari, pointing out that eveybody whom I had met in Calcutta was full of praise for him The Prime Minister said that he was inclined to agree that Mr Rajagopalachari would be the best successor to me; though he said rather sadly, "In any case we don't seem to have anyone else who would do" I told him that I was sure he would do the job admirably

Top Secret

Record of Governor-General's Interview with the Prime Minister on April 20, 1948

My wife had had a brainwave which I put to Nehru, namely that Sardar Patel should become the first Indian Governor-General in succession to myself

I reminded him that Mr Rajagopalachari had only accepted to succeed me under great pressure because he really wished to remain in West Bengal I further pointed out that after Sardar Patel's recent heart attack at the age of 72, he certainly could not carry on with the three portfolios as well as run the AICC.

In fact it was doubtful whether he could possibly continue in the forefront of the political arena, constantly seeing the stream of people who were always waiting to see him in his house and in his office.

I suggested that with Sardar Patel at Government House, Pandit Nehru would have an admirable supporter and would be able to obtain his services for at least five and possibly ten years, whereas if he continued at his present rate, another heart attack could finish him off, or at any rate he would not be able to count on him for more than two or three years at the most

Pandit Nehru was immensely taken at this idea, but said he could not possibly make his suggestion himself, as he felt Sardar Patel might misunderstand it. He asked me to put it to him and

I said I would certainly do so at his party that evening, and give Pandit Nehru the answer immediately afterwards. I told him that I would not tell him I had already discussed it with Pandit Nehru.

Note of an Interview with Sardar Patel on April 20, 1948

I managed to get Sardar Patel alone on his couch at his party and put the above idea to him. He roared with laughter at the suggestion but I begged him to take my proposal seriously and put all the points to him. I told him that I intended to tell Pandit Nehru about it at once.

I then went out and told Pandit Nehru to go and attack him as soon as possible, which he agreed to do.

Meanwhile my wife attacked Sardar Patel's daughter (and caretaker!) Miss Maniben Patel. She put the case strongly to her and received a favourable reaction.